EIGHTH
エイス
7

The Eighth Day of Creation

河内和泉

GC JOKER

EIGHTH エイス 7

河内和泉

SQUARE ENIX

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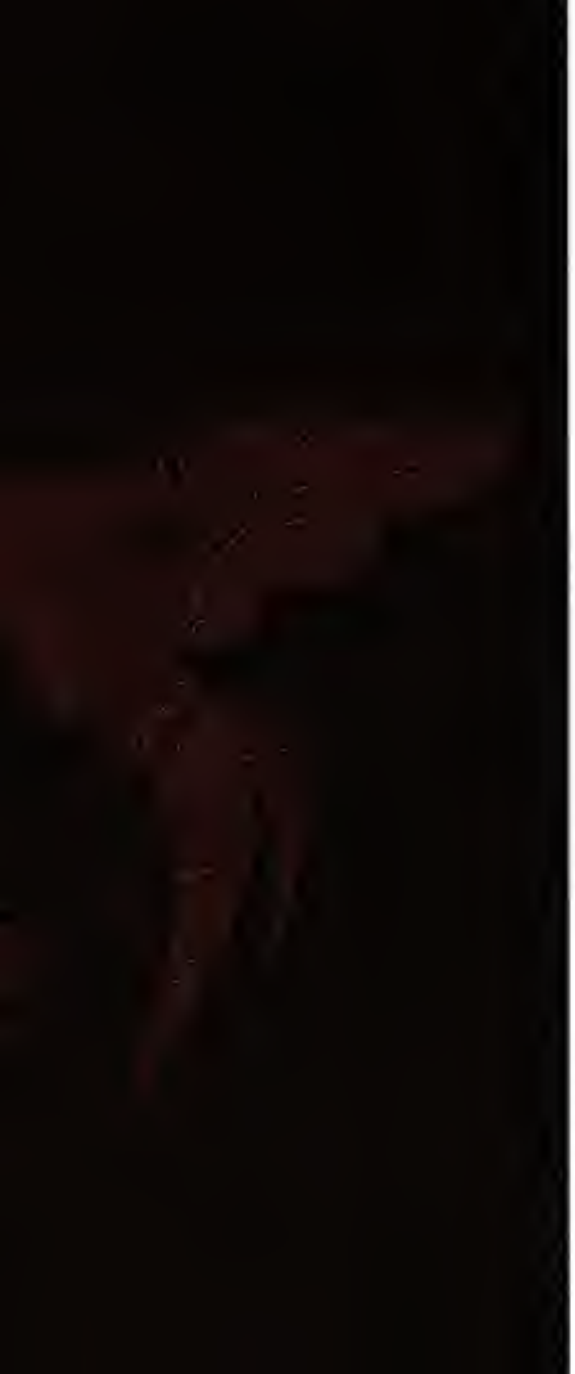
SQUARE ENIX.

iPS細胞の研究中に
突如倒れたりお。
彼女の病気を治療する
ために、行動を起こすナオヤ。
一方のバチカンでは、
セルシアの待遇が
想像とは違い、彼女を連れてきたことを
後悔するルカ。そこで、思わぬ
大事件が発生することになり…。
セルシア&ルカの運命は如何に――…!?
大人気バチカン編、クライマックス!!



河内和泉

色々と期待されている・PSもまだまだ問題点が多く、前巻とはうって変わって、この巻からはそういう話に入っていきます。これはとても夢のない話に聞こえるかもしれませんが、それを乗り越えた先になにができるようになるんだろうとか思いを馳せてもらえればと思います。
とりあえず、旦下りお先生とセルシアが絶地です。
第十二人は間に合うか。

IZUMI KAWACHI

EIGHTH
エイス

7

Biology

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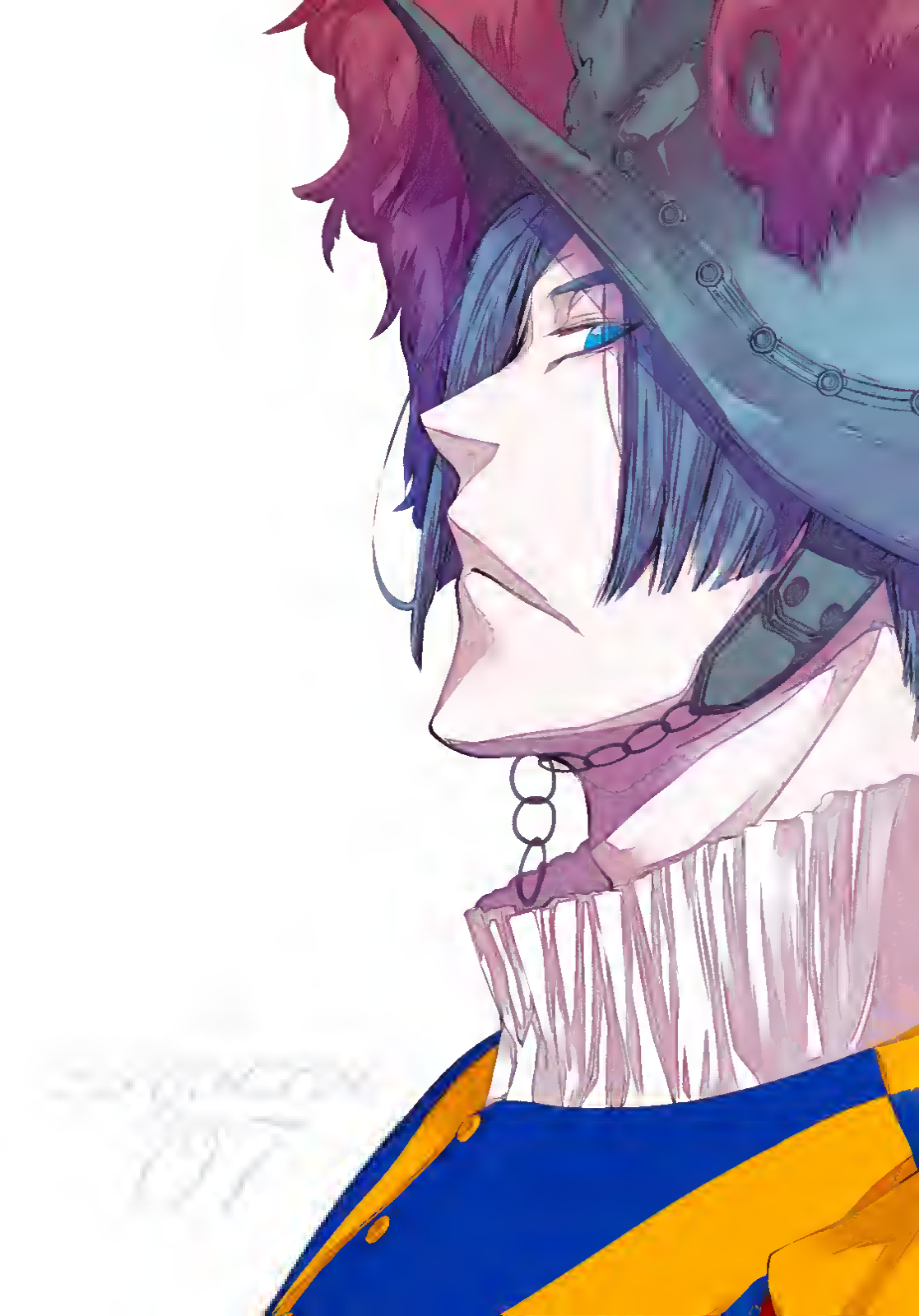
SQUARE ENIX



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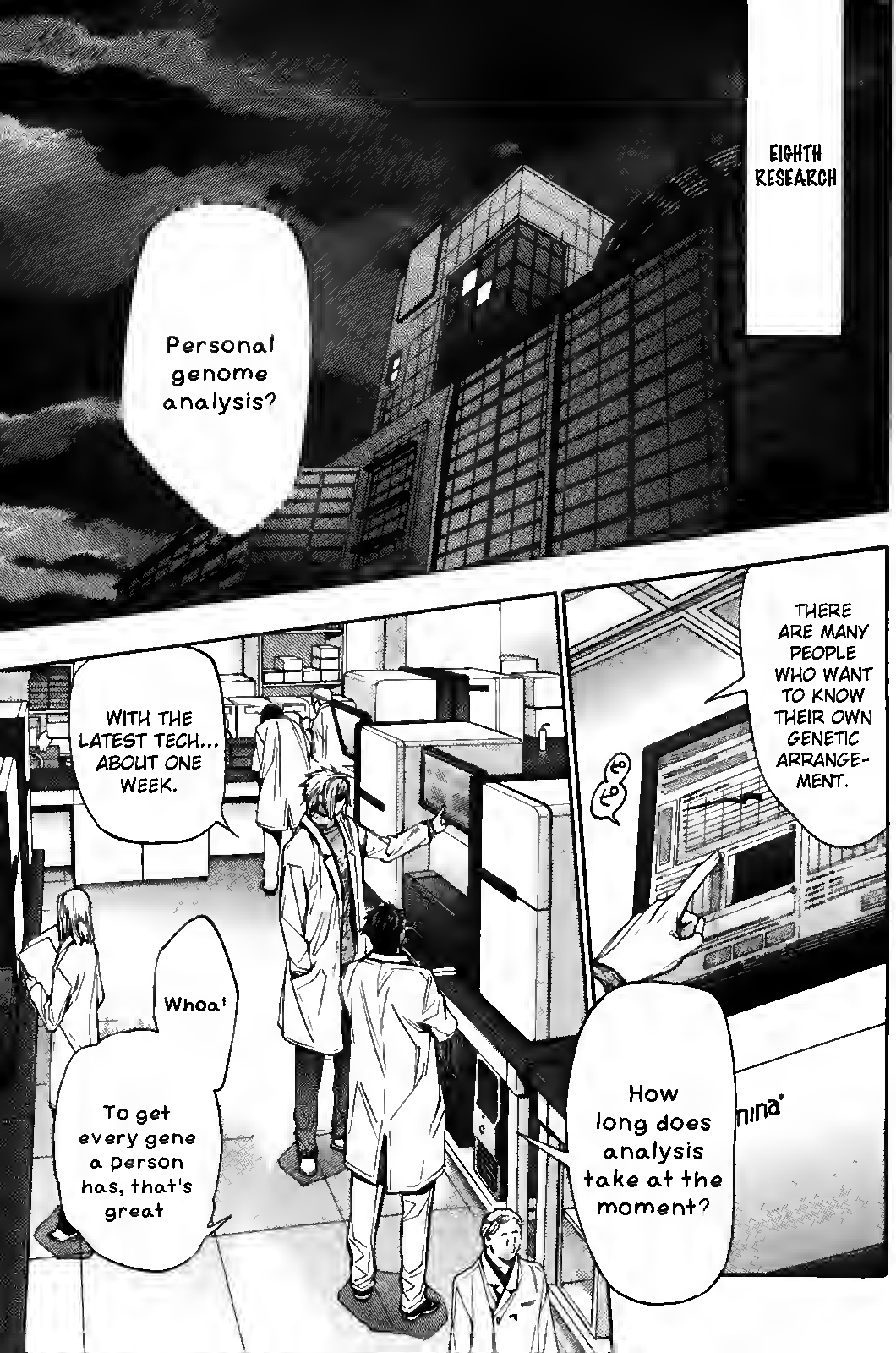
RIO!
HEY...
Unh
...

RIO!

.....
...I THOUGHT I HEARD SOME-THING.
...WAS IT JUST MY IMAGINA-TION?
...WHAT IS IT?
THIS AWFUL FEELING...

Operation.25 (オペレーション)
Quality of Life, (クオリティ オブ ライフ) ⑥
A Slight Error In The Code


EIGHTH RESEARCH
Personal genome analysis?
WITH THE LATEST TECH... ABOUT ONE WEEK.
Whoa!
To get every gene a person has, that's great
THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WHO WANT TO KNOW THEIR OWN GENETIC ARRANGE-MENT.
How long does analysis take at the moment?

THE ERROR RATE HAS BEEN LOWERED, BUT WE STILL RUN IT 20-30 TIMES.
No, no, this is great
In the past it would take thousands of hours, and the machines that you have now

WE'VE IMPROVED BY A FACTOR OF ABOUT 10 YEARS IN TERMS OF PERFORMANCE.
Huh...
REALLY, THIS SEQUENCER WAS SO EXPENSIVE...

WHEN WE USED IT FOR ANALYZING THE CORN, WE DIDN'T REALLY KNOW WHAT TO DO.
So many of the Eighth staff have changed!
HOW ABOUT IT, DR SHINJOU?
YOU WANNA TRY SEQUENCING YOUR OWN GENES?

So that's what you mean?
It's about knowing the likelihood of you catching specific illnesses, right?
IT'S "RISK DIAGNOSIS", SINCE YOU ASKED.
Eh? No way
What if you were to tell me "You have a 50% chance of developing Alzheimer's"?
HAHA...
Not until Hikaru gets married.
Ah, my phone
SFX: RING-RING-RING
YO, CHIEF HERE...
SFX: BEEP
Chief!! Where'd you wander off to?!!
I've told you, tell me before you go!!
Who is it?
THE YOUNG WOMAN WITH BIG TITS.
Oh yeah, that bouncy one
Hey! Stay right there.

I'M IN THE ANALYSIS ROOM, GIVING DR SHINJOU THE RUNDOWN.
That's fine, but...
please hurry back to your office.
Oh.

No, sorry. Instead, please hurry to the lobby at the entrance of 4th Labs.
I'm going out.
Where?
Rio-sensei collapsed and went to a hospital.

An abnormality was found in her blood test.
WHAT?
It's dire.
Next she will...

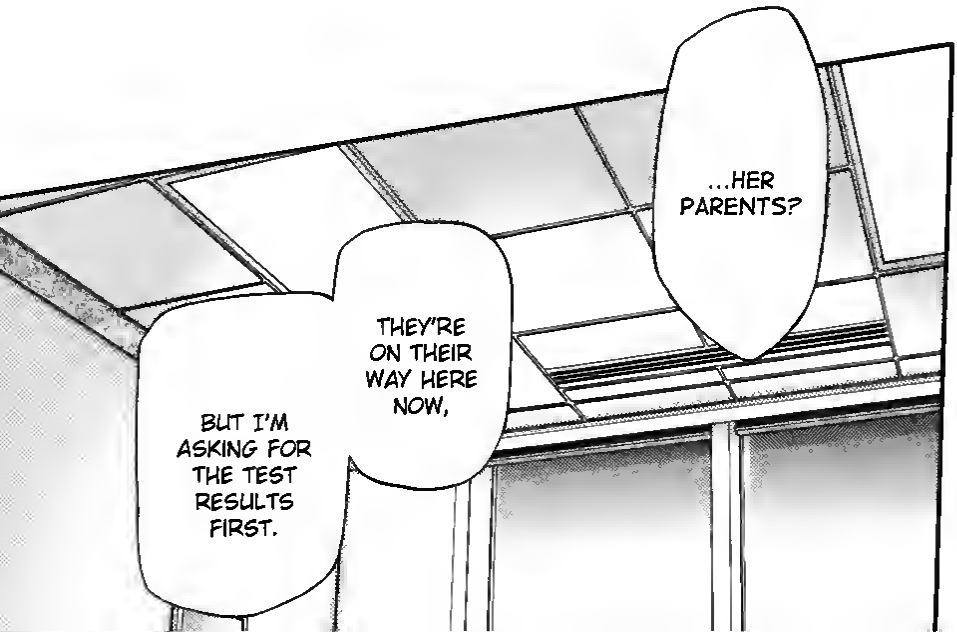
be undergoing bone marrow centesis.
...A BIOPSY?
Naoya-kun is with her at the moment.

DON'T MOVE, RIO-CHAN.
IT'S JUST 3ML. IT'LL BE OVER IN 10 SECONDS.
OKAY, LET'S GO. THE ANESTHESIA IS TAKING EFFECT.
RIO.
HEY, IT'LL BE OVER IN NO TIME.
Naoya-onii-chan...
I'm fine, as long as Onii-chan is here. Please, go ahead and do it.
Ah... Yeah, let's go.
YOU GIVE THE ORDER.
RIO, TELL THEM WHEN TO BEGIN.

BEGIN-
NING
INSER-
TION.
Unh
...
DOES IT
HURT?
...No.
I feel
pressure...
YES.
RIO-CHAN,
YOU'RE REALLY
COOL-HEADED.
WONDER-
FUL.
I'M
DRAWING
THE BONE
MARROW
ASPIRATE.

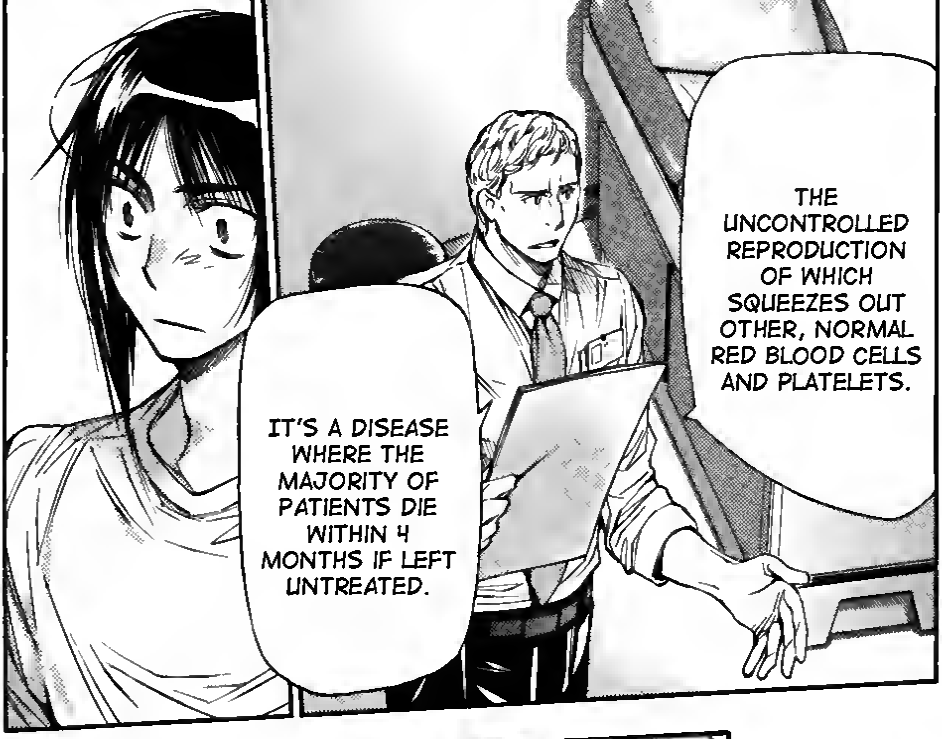
U...
Unh...
Uah
...
Ah...
Unnn
nnh!

Nnn
nnn...


...HER PARENTS?
THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY HERE NOW,
BUT I'M ASKING FOR THE TEST RESULTS FIRST.

TN: HTTP://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/ACUTE_LYMPHOBLASTIC_LEUKEMIA

...EH?
...L-
LEU-KEMIA ...?!
"ACUTE LYMPHO-BLASTIC LEUKEMIA".
IT'S A DISEASE WHERE MALIGNANT LYMPHOCYTES MULTIPLY AT AN ACCELERATED RATE*...
*IT'S NOT THAT BAD, HIGH CHANCE OF SURVIVAL IF CAUGHT EARLY.


THE UNCONTROLLED REPRODUCTION OF WHICH SQUEEZES OUT OTHER, NORMAL RED BLOOD CELLS AND PLATELETS.
IT'S A DISEASE WHERE THE MAJORITY OF PATIENTS DIE WITHIN 4 MONTHS IF LEFT UNTREATED.

*THIS IS WHAT REALLY MAKES CANCERS BAD, NOT JUST THE CELL GROWTH

...WHY RIO?
BECAUSE SHE'S BEEN WORKING TOO HARD?
YOU'RE PUSHING HER TOO FAR?
HEY NOW, DON'T GO GUESSING.
THE ONSET OF "ALL" IS MOST COMMON WITH CHILDREN.
Though it also happens to working adults
THE EXACT FACTORS ARE UN-KNOWN.
IT'S POSSIBLE FOR IT TO APPEAR IN ANYONE.
ALTHOUGH ...

I BELIEVE IT CAN BE CURED WITH TREATMENT.
WE HAVEN'T FOUND ANY CHROMOSOMAL ABNORMALITIES IN RIO-SENSEI.
WHATEVER ELSE MIGHT BE SAID, SHE'S STILL A "SMALL CHILD".
CURRENTLY, THE LONG-TERM SURVIVAL RATE FOR SMALL-CHILD "ALL" IS 80-90%.
ARE YOU KIDDING MEEE?
GIVE THE LONG-WINDED STORY A REST ALREADY.
JUST TREAT HER WITH LARGE DOSES OF ANTI-CANCER MEDS!
!
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO BE GENTLE!!

UHM ...
THERE IS ONE PROB-LEM.
WHAT IS IT, DOC?
...BEFORE COMMENCING "ALL" TREATMENT, A GENETIC SCREEN-ING MUST OCCUR... DURING WHICH WE FOUND ONE ITEM.
WE CONFIRMED A DEFICIT OF TPMT IN RIO-SAN'S GENES*.

* A HIGH CHANCE OF SURVIVAL UNLESS THIS HAPPENS, THAT IS

... WHAT?
TPMT?
AS THINGS STAND, WE CAN'T TREAT IT WITH THE USUAL MEDICATION.
TPMT IS ONE OF THE ENZYMES USED IN THE LIVER.
IF THE GENES THAT CREATE IT AREN'T WORKING, THE BODY CAN'T BREAK DOWN, OR "METABOLIZE", THE TOXIC ANTI-CANCER AGENT "6MP"*.
*HE'S PROBABLY REFERRING TO 6-MERCAPTOPURINE, A PROMINENT ANTI-CANCER TREATMENT.

IF IT REMAINS IN THE BODY IN HIGH CONCENTRATIONS, IT CAN CAUSE SEVERE LIVER DAMAGE AND INHIBIT BONE MARROW PRODUCTION.
IF THE DOSAGE GIVEN TO RIO-SAN WAS OFF EVEN A LITTLE, IT WOULD BE DREADFUL.
EH...? SO YOU MEAN...
THE TREATMENT COULD ACTUALLY MAKE THINGS WORSE...?

HEY!
WAIT UP, NAOYA!!

WHERE ARE YOU GOING? STAY WITH SENSEI.
YEAH, LIKE ME STAYING WITH HER IS GOING TO MAKE HER BETTER!
I'M GONNA DO WHAT I CAN DO.
YOU HEARD THE CONVERSATION! TPMT DEFICIENCY IS TREATABLE.
WE SIMPLY DON'T KNOW THE CORRECT DOSAGE, DO WE?!
WE WON'T KNOW UNTIL WE ACTUALLY TRY!
...IF WE LOOK AT PREVIOUS CASES OF CHILDREN WITH THE SAME TPMT DEFICIENCY.
TYPICALLY 1 IN 5 CHILDREN DERIVED GREATLY BENEFICIAL EFFECTS.
CONVERSELY, 1 IN 9 CHILDREN DEVELOPED SEVERE DAMAGE TO THE LIVER.

YES?
HEY...
...
AH—
.....
Factor of 30...
1/4
1/5
IT'S SAID THAT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE WHO ARE NORMAL AND DEFICIENT IS A FACTOR OF 30.
IT'S DANGEROUS TO ALLOW THE LEUKEMIA CELLS TO CONTINUE MULTIPLYING FREELY.
Sorry, I can't keep up.
COULD YOU TRY EXPLAINING MORE SLOWLY...?!
.....
ON THE OTHER HAND, WE CAN'T AFFORD TO SIMPLY NOT GIVE HER ANY.
IT'S ALSO BAD IF THE AMOUNT OF 6MP IS TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE.
HOW ABOUT...
.....

IF EIGHTH HELPS OUT
BY CREATING LIVER CELLS CARRYING RIO-SENSEI'S GENES?
THAT WAY WE CAN TEST THE TOXICITY OF 6MP THAT THEY CAN HANDLE.
OH, WITH IPS?
TOXICITY TESTING IS ONE OF OUR COMPANY'S SERVICES.
WE HAVEN'T DONE 6MP METABOLISM BEFORE,
AND THERE ARE TOO MANY ELEMENTS TO DETERMINE WHAT DOSAGE WOULD BE EFFECTIVE,
BUT AT THE VERY LEAST WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT AMOUNT WOULD BE DANGEROUS.

JUST DOING THAT MUCH WOULD BE A LIFESAVER.
BUT EVEN THEN...
WHAT KIND OF TIME FRAME ARE WE TALKING ABOUT HERE?
THEN I'D LIKE ANOTHER 3-4 WEEKS FOR THE TOXICITY TESTS.
YOU CAN'T WAIT THAT LONG?
TESTING SO MANY GMP VARIATIONS IN 4 WEEKS... THAT MEANS IT WOULD BE A MONTH BEFORE THE DRUG COULD BE USED.
SHUT UP.
CHIEF!!
Chief, you're so nice
SFX: KYAAA—
TWO MONTHS TO TRANSFORM IPS TO LIVER CELLS,
SO... THREE MONTHS ...?
.....

WE CAN'T EVEN WAIT 2 MONTHS. IT'LL BE JUST THE SAME AS IF WE HADN'T BEGUN TREATMENT FROM THE VERY START!
IN THAT CASE, IT WOULD BE BETTER IF WE DID SPOT TESTS WITH GMP ON HER.
.....
...THAT SUCKS.
BUT...
IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN IT CAN'T BE HELPED...

!
NAOYA!!
"WHY RIO?"
"WHAT DID RIO DO TO DESERVE THIS?"

I'M GOING TO...
CALL CELCIA HERE.
I THOUGHT YOU'D SAY THAT... BUT YOU CAN'T.
IF IT'S JUST FOR AN EXAMINATION, WE CAN SIMPLY EXCISE SOME OUT OF THE LIVER.
CUT INTO RIO?! BUT HER LIVER IS PERFECTLY FINE!
REGARDLESS, WE'LL DO WHAT WE NEED TO DO WITH THE TECHNIQUES AT OUR DISPOSAL.
WE DON'T NEED TO RESORT TO USING "CELCIA".

BUT...
IF WE HAD CELCIA'S POWER, THEN IN NO TIME WE COULD—
NO BUTS.
ALTHOUGH IPS WOULD GIVE US A FAR BETTER CHANCE TO HEAL HER,
EVEN IF WE STARTED RIGHT THIS MOMENT, IT STILL WOULDN'T GIVE US ENOUGH TIME TO USE IT.
THEN HOW MUCH TIME ARE YOU SAYING YOU WOULD NEED TO USE IT?!
HEY.

THEN GO SAY THAT IN FRONT OF RIO-SENSEI.
gulp
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN LOOKING AT WITH RIO-SENSEI?
HAVE YOU BEEN DOING ALL OF THAT RESEARCH JUST SO SHE COULD DIE LIKE THIS?!

SO IF THINGS GET A BIT DICEY, YOU JUST SHOOT YOUR MOUTH OFF SAYING "CELCIA"...?
OR IS IT THAT YOU WANNA JOIN IN ON THE "HUNT FOR CELCIA" COMPETITION?

N...

SO, IN YOUR MORAL DUTY TO SAVE THE CUTE RIO-SENSEI, NOTHING IS OFF-LIMITS?

YOU'LL GO TO THE VATICAN AND STEAL CELCIA AWAY?

EVEN BAD IDEAS HAVE THEIR LIMITS.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT
THEN LEAVE EIGHTH.
IF IT WERE STILL TO PROTECT CELCIA, THEN I WOULD UNDERSTAND...
BUT THIS TIME IT'S DIFFERENT.
I'LL USE ANYTHING AND ANYONE I CAN TO SAVE RIO, BUT I WON'T USE CELCIA.
.....
I...

I'm gonna work hard on lots of experiments today!
Naoya-onii-san, let's hurry off to the lab!
I DON'T WANT THAT TECH-NOLOGY TO GO TO WASTE.
MAYBE THE PROBLEM CAN BE AVOIDED, BUT EVEN SO...

I ALSO DON'T WANT WHAT RIO-SENSEI AND HER ASSOCIATES WERE DOING TO GO TO WASTE.
KNOW...
THAT RIO'S WORKING HARD.
If I can create iPS from blood instead of skin cells
then it won't hurt the patients...
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT SHE'S THINK-ING?!
I WANT TO GET RIO BACK TO THE LAB QUICKLY.
WHAT'S MORE, DELAYED TREATMENT COULD MAKE IT TAKE EVEN LONGER...
I got from the lab
Dere'za lotta emails

How many more painful memories will continuing with this give her?
How much pain will she go through...?
Unh...
...
!
Sorry, but... I'm going.
Chief.

I JUST WANNA SAVE RIO!
LOOK, IT'S NOT THAT I'M SOMEHOW LOOKING DOWN ON RESEARCHERS.

.....
...I KNOW THAT.
...DO WHAT YOU WANT.

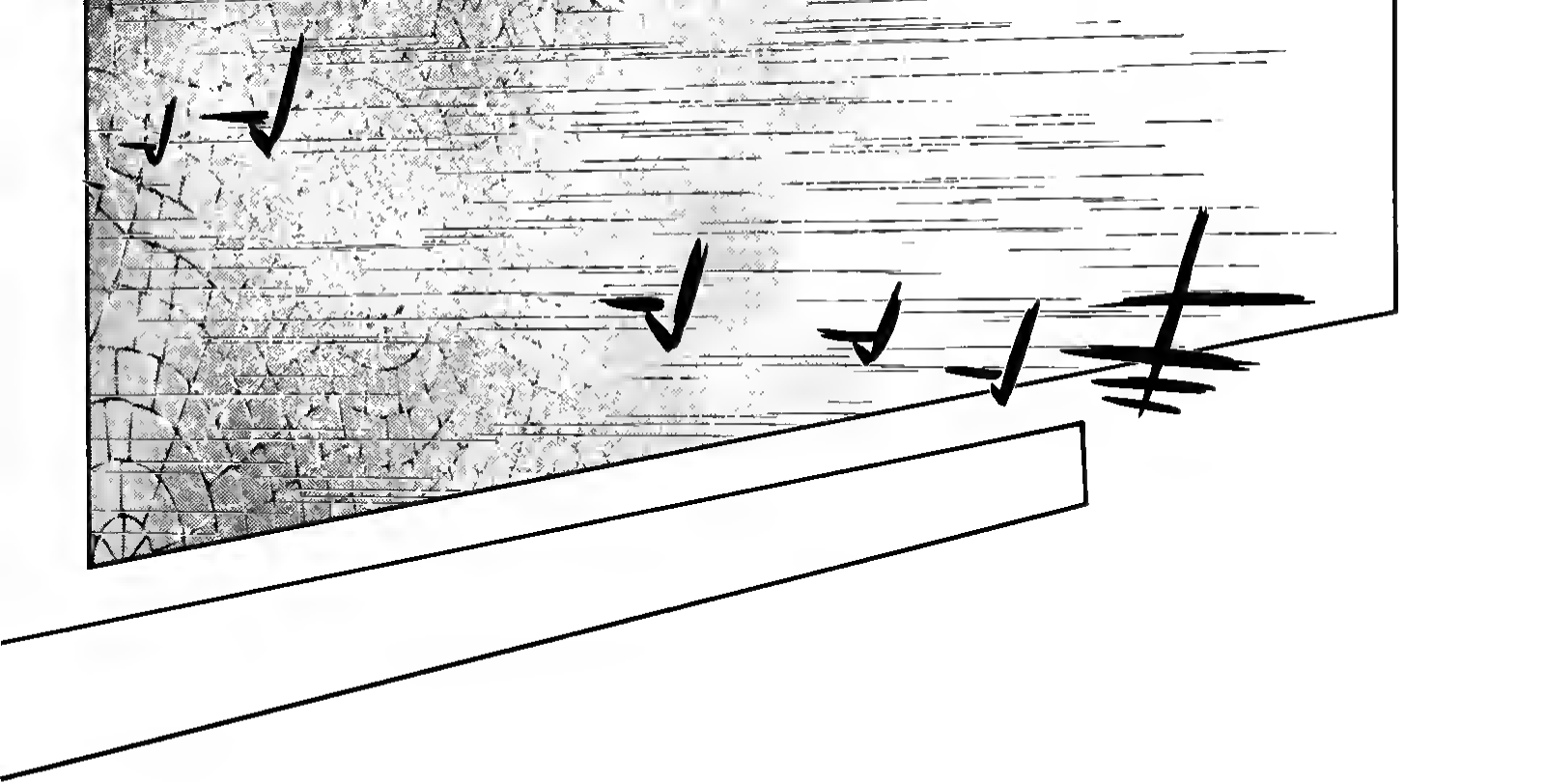
WHOA!
HEY! HOLD—
HOLD ON, NAOYA!
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
I'M GOING.

WHERE?
THE VATICAN.
WHAT?!
I'VE GOTTA SEE CELCIA.
I'LL LEAVE THINGS HERE TO YOU.

NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, YOU'RE ACTING WEIRD.
I'M IN A HURRY!
EXPLAIN. ALL OF IT!
grrrr
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!
Ohh. That means...
In other words...
And so you see...
Well, basically...
SFX: GYAAAAH
RIO HAS LEUKEMI-AAAA?!!
I SEE ...
That's what it means, huh?
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?! YOU DIDN'T CONTACT ME AT ALL!
I DIDN'T HAVE TIME. IT'S AN EMERGENCY, YOU KNOW?!
OH.

There you are.
Oh!
HEY, SHOUNEN!
SORRY, BUT I NEED YOU FOR...
PLEASE WAIT RIGHT THERE AND I'LL CALL ANOTHER GUARD FOR YOU RIGHT AWAY.
HMM?
I SEE.
Good afternoon.
EXCUSE ME, DR ANGELA. I'M IN A REAL HURRY.
I REALLY NEED TO GO OUT!
Heeey!
ESCORT ME WHEN YOU GET BACK...!
I REALLY AM SORRY.
YOU'RE GOING SOMEWHERE? I HAVE THINGS TO DO.

NAOYA.
I'M IN A HURRY TOO...
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
OKAY!
I'M COUNTING ON YOU, SHOUNEN!



SO...
SHE'LL GO TO THE SCIENCE ACADEMY IN 3 DAYS?

IT SEEMS A NUMBER OF ACADEMICS HAVE ALREADY OCCUPIED QUARTERS.
This is hard to understand.
Grrr
WE HAVE TO PROVIDE LODGING FOR THEM, YES?
?
BUT IN THE POPE'S ABSENCE, WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO...?
EVEN SO, THE RAIN'S POUNDING OUT THERE.

CARD-
INAL
JENGA.
ナニ？
... SISTER ELDA.
WHAT BUSINESS DO YOU HAVE ON THIS FLOOR?
WHAT'S MORE, YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A PEEPING TOM.
SFX: GASP
DON'T JEST LIKE THAT.
コッ
I THOUGHT I WOULD CAUTION THE SISTERS ABOUT THE NOISE FROM ALL OF THEIR GOSSIPY CHATTERING.
...I AM VERY SORRY ABOUT THAT. I SHALL TELL ALL OF THEM.

SERI-
OUSLY,
THIS
IS WHY
WOMEN
ARE A
PAIN.

...3 more days.
What...
should I do ...?

04
EIGHTH

TL/TLC: Castellan
Typesetter: TKS
Cleaner: Zack
PR: Not Juubun

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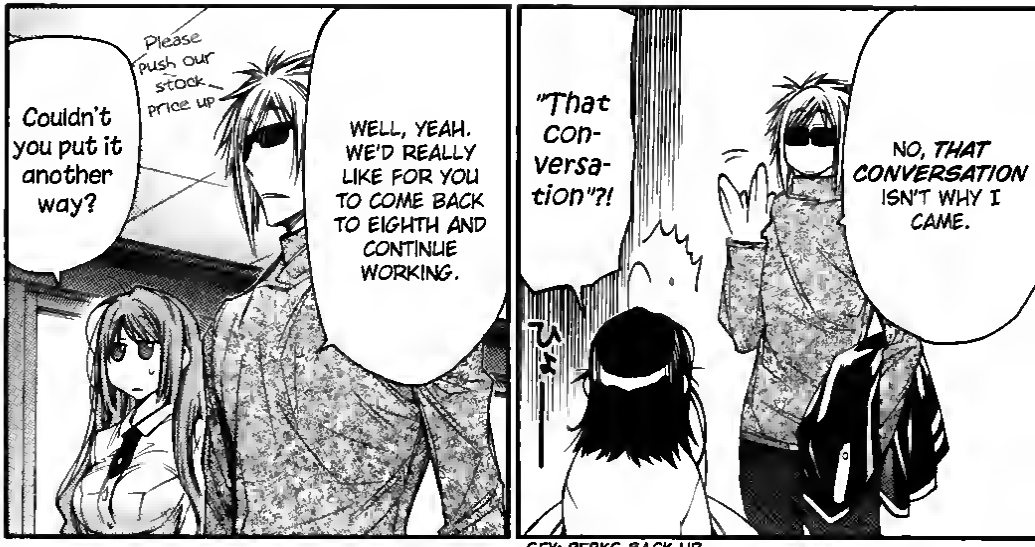
"IF WE HAD CELCIA'S POWER, THEN IN NO TIME WE COULD—"
IF WE USE IPS, THEN WE CAN AVOID THE PROBLEM, RIGHT?
I DON'T WANT
WHAT RIO-SENSEI AND THE OTHERS HAVE DONE TO GO TO WASTE.
...IT'S NOT AS THOUGH I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW HE FEELS, BUT...

EXIT
IT'S DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE IN AND ACCEPT
SUCH AN UN-REASONABLE ARGUMENT.
NO.
THAT'S THE WRONG WAY TO DO IT.
SOMEONE WILL MISUNDERSTAND YOUR INTENT.
IT'S NOT LIKE THEY'LL LET YOU WALTZ RIGHT INTO THE VATICAN.
YOU'LL HAVE TO STEAL HER AWAY.
WELL, WHETHER IT'S WRONG OR NOT WILL DEPEND ON THE END RESULT.
1153-S
Dr John R. TENNOUJI
...WHAT DO WE DO?

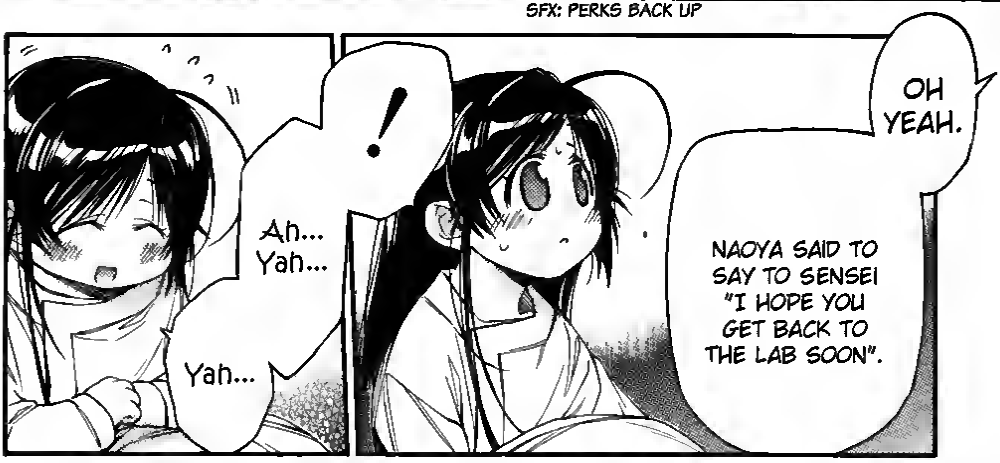
Operation.26 (オペレーション)
Quality of Life, ⑦ a sacrifice (クオリティ オブ ライフ ア サクリファイス 生贄 いけにえ)

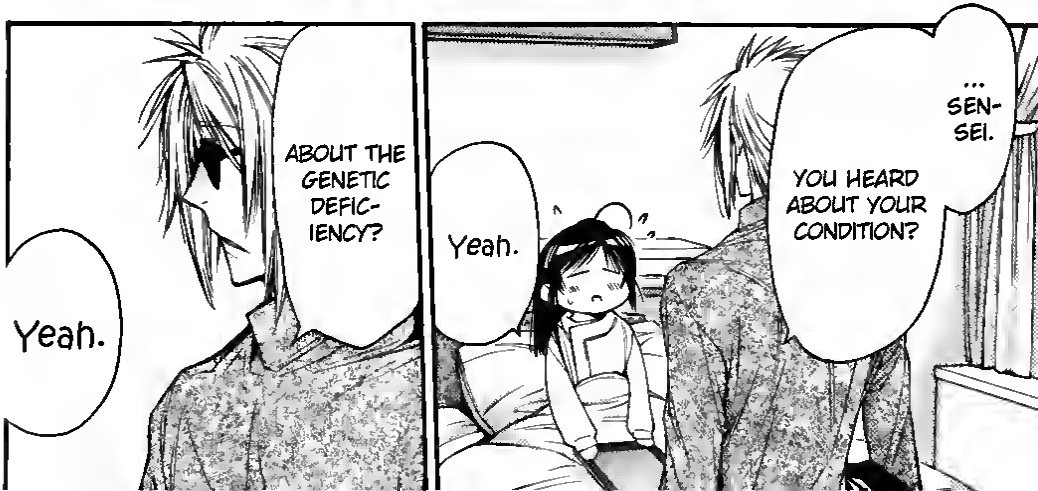
ぱっ
ガチャン
...RIO-SENSEI.
Ah!
Ah...
Oh.
It's Chief-san...?
Hi.
コツ
コツ
ちちちち
Ah!
No, no, no, no, no, no! I'm so sorry!
...SORRY TO DISAPPOINT.
SFX: FLUSTERED
NAOYA HASN'T COME BY HERE?
No, he hasn't come.
ちちちち

しょぼ…
N-No...
I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT STUPID KID, SENSEI.
Eh? Has Naoya-kun gone somewhere?
...GEEZ, HOW RUDE OF HIM.
SFX: GLOOMY...
YES?
Getting in a state like this while on the job... well...
Um... My work...
?
I'm sorry, Chief-san.
Ah, hey...
...Even though I was specifically invited to Eighth to do research, I...


Please push our stock price up
Couldn't you put it another way?
WELL, YEAH. WE'D REALLY LIKE FOR YOU TO COME BACK TO EIGHTH AND CONTINUE WORKING.
"That conversation"?!
NO, THAT CONVERSATION ISN'T WHY I CAME.

SFX: PERKS BACK UP



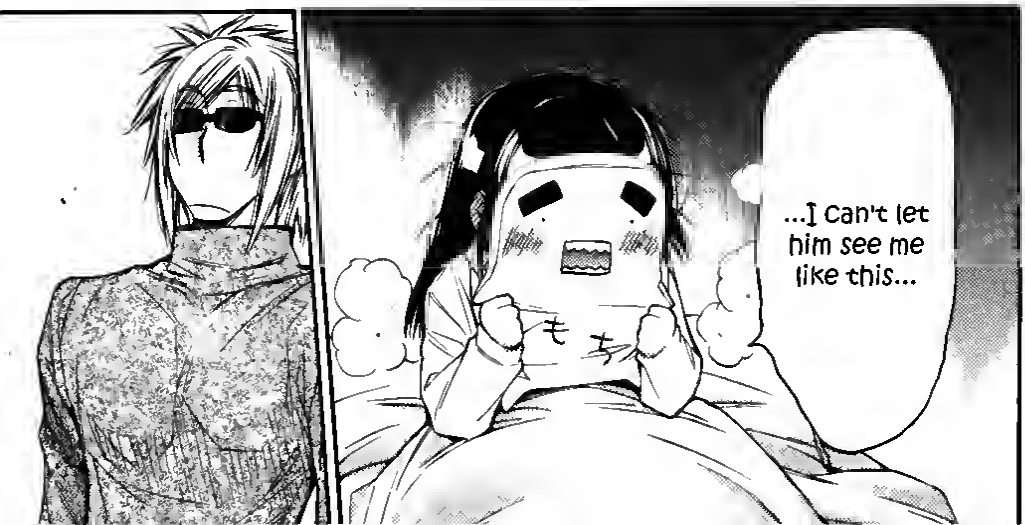


"TPMT Deficit".
Because the genes are different, an enzyme made in the liver doesn't get created...
Whoa...
MODERN TECH-NOLOGY ...
on the Internet.
With Ipad-san
Well, I didn't know about it at first, so I looked into it.
SFX: BAP BAP
...There's medicine, but it's dangerous for me to drink...
YOU CAN DRINK IT IF WE TAKE CARE WITH THE DOSAGE.
...WE WON'T KNOW BEFORE THE FACT, AND WE HAVE TO FEEL OUR WAY ALONG,
BUT THERE'S ALSO A RISK OF LIVER DAMAGE...
Yeah, I know. I'm ready.
"Trial and error".
It's funda-mental...

THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM RESEARCH. IT CREATES TOO MANY ERRORS.
...BUT IT CAN'T BE HELPED.
EITHER WAY, SENSEI, YOU GRASPED IT SO QUICKLY...
tap
...!
...SENSEI.
ARE YOU OKAY WITH NAOYA NOT BEING WITH YOU?

Eh ...?
IF HE WAS HERE, HE'D JUST BE KILLING TIME.
IF YOU NEED HIM, I WILL CALL HIM BACK.
DON'T HOLD BACK.
No, No, No, NO!
Er...
No, no, no, no! I'm fine!
Um...
Chief!
IF NECESSARY I'LL HAVE HIM SLEEP WITH YOU.
THERE'S REALLY NO NEED TO HOLD BACK.

SFX: ONE LONG EMBARRASSED RED-FACED FLUSTER



Geez...
Huh...?
You don't understand a maiden's heart.
But he was here earlier...
No, that's...
...WELL EXCUSE ME.
Naoya-onii-san has escort work...
Ehhh??
!??

...I'll be fine.
I'm sure he has lots of other tasks to accomplish.
And so...

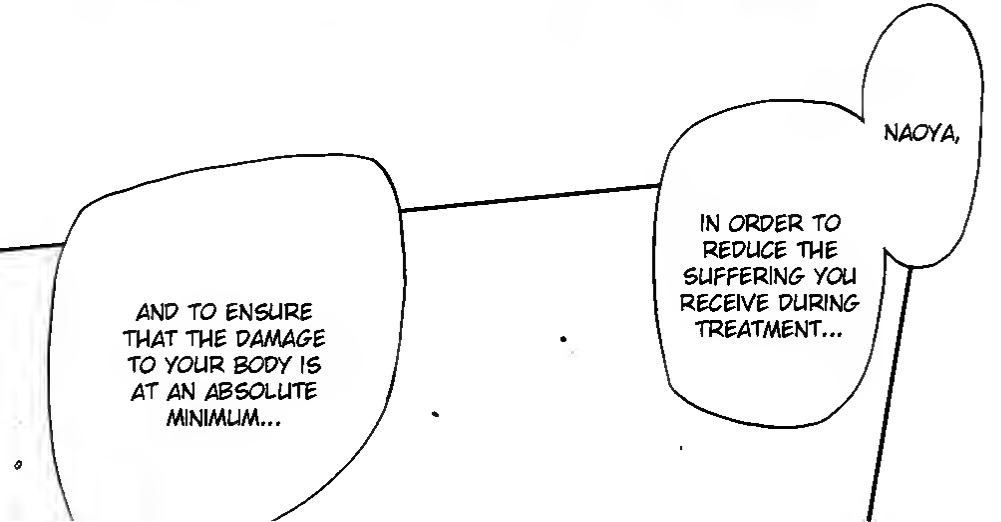
Really?
IN FACT, PROTECTING YOU IS THE ONLY THING NAOYA CAN THINK OF RIGHT NOW.
NAH.
.....

NAOYA...
...IT'S IN HIS NATURE TO SUPPORT YOU, NO MATTER WHAT.
?
THE CIRCUMSTANCES ARE DIFFERENT FROM YOURS, BUT... WELL...
IT'S BECAUSE NAOYA WAS SICK
WHEN HE WAS AROUND YOUR AGE.

ANYWAY, HE USED TO BE SICK, SO WHEN HE SEES SOMEONE WHO CAN'T MOVE AS THEY LIKE, HE CAN'T HELP BUT GET INVOLVED.
!!
ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S SOMEONE YOUNGER THAN HE IS.
Rio-sensei wins on all counts there.
AND A RESEARCHER AT THAT.
... Na-
Naoya-onii-san was...?
IT'S A SECRET. HE'D GET UPSET IF HE KNEW I TOLD YOU.
Umm, but he's a really healthy person.
He works his body so much! He runs really fast.
He even did somersaults for me...

SFX: STUNNED

SFX: STUNNED


NAOYA,
IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE SUFFERING YOU RECEIVE DURING TREATMENT...
AND TO ENSURE THAT THE DAMAGE TO YOUR BODY IS AT AN ABSOLUTE MINIMUM...

ASKED IF WE COULD USE IPS FOR THE TESTING.
IT PROB-ABLY... NO,
IT DEFINITELY WOULDN'T BE IN TIME, BUT...
EH?
YOU HAVE A MAP OF THE VATICAN?!
YUP.
H-HOW'D YOU LAY YOUR HANDS ON SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
HOW?
WAAH!
Tada
I HAVE THE VATICAN TOURIST GUIDE.

Wow
Everything's in here
OH YEAH, IT'S A TOURIST SPOT.
I came here once before myself
IT HAS EVERYTHING ABOUT THE INTERIOR.
THEY'VE ALSO MARKED THE PLACES ORDINARY PEOPLE CAN'T GO.
SFX: FLIP FLIP
I'M SURE CELCIA'S IN ONE OF THOSE PLACES.
WE CAN ASK LUCA.
EH? WHERE IS THAT GUY?
I DUNNO.
LET'S ASK.
Excuuuse me!
SHE'S IN-TENSE...!

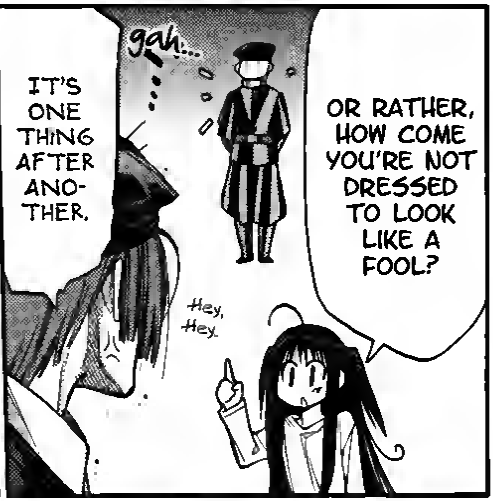
OH,
"VATICAN SCIENCE ACADEMY".
!!?
.....
SFX: FLIP
THIS BUILDING HERE.
IT SAYS THE VATICAN UNIVERSITY IS HERE.
30
32
33
35
..A PLACE FOR ADHERENTS OF CATHOLIC "RELIGION" TO STUDY "SCIENCE"...
HOLD IT... YOU'RE GONNA DUMP THIS ON CELCIA?
DON'T BE STUPID!
.....

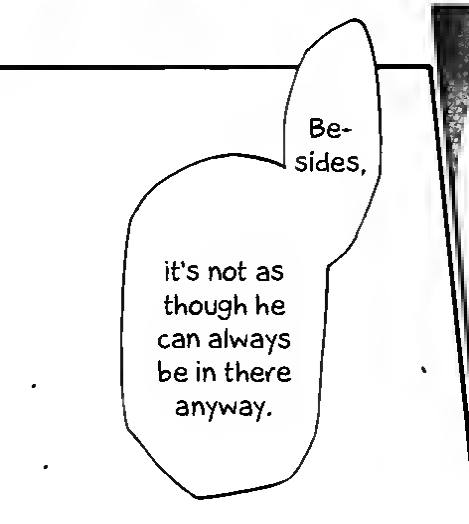
I WONDER IF
THINGS ARE FINE LIKE THIS?
.....
I BROUGHT CELCIA HERE AS PER HER WISH.
I was under orders.
Fighting with people... even killing someone to bring her here.
WHAT'S WITH THIS SORRY STATE?
BUT...
It's too late to feel sympathy for them...

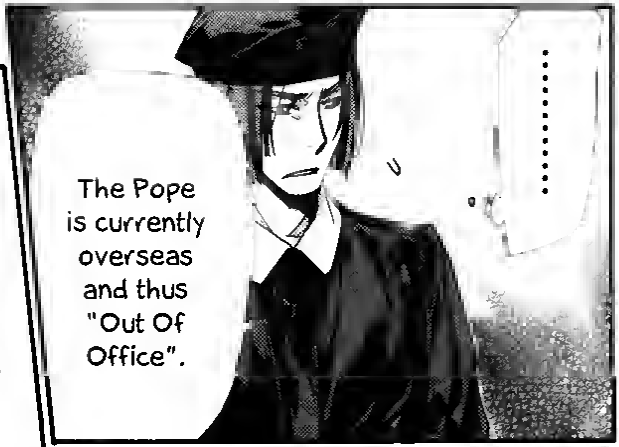
I will have put her in the exact situation she wanted to avoid.
IF CELCIA SHOWS OFF AT THE ACADEMY, I'M SURE OTHERS WHO COVET HER WILL COME OUT.
IF SO, AS THE ONE WHO BROUGHT HER HERE,
WAS I WRONG TO HAVE ASKED HER WHAT SHE WISHED FOR?
BEFORE THAT, IS THE POWER SHE WAS BORN WITH A BAD THING?
That can't be it.
There's nothing bad about Celcia!
I DID EVERYTHING I POSSIBLY COULD, AND YET...
YO.

30
WHAT ...?!
DUMBSTRUCK AS ALWAYS, AREN'T YA?
Why were you guys coming up behind me?
NO, WE WERE TO THE SIDE OF YOU.

SFX: TREMBLING







As a sentry, I do not have one particular place that I guard,
nor will I ever.
.....?
...No.
It's just as well.
.....

What?
LUCA,
WON'T YOU HELP ME SEE CELCIA?
!?
I WANT TO BORROW CELCIA'S POWER.

WHAT...?
YOU ...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
RIO IS SICK.
YOU KNOW ABOUT RIO TOO, DON'T YOU?
SHE'S THE LITTLE GIRL CELCIA BECAME FRIENDS WITH!

You...
.....
...You sure say the funniest things...
I'M NOT HERE TO MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND.
JUST LET US MEET CELCIA!
WHAT?!
To begin with, it's not that easy to meet with her.
IN THAT CASE, LET US THROUGH.
Let you through? To go where?
TO CELCIA!

WHY?
As I said before, I am just one sentry.
Unless I am called, I can't move.
Impos-sible.
FINE THEN. I WON'T ASK YOU. I'LL DO IT ON MY OWN.
IT MAY ALREADY BE TOO LATE FOR RIO.
I don't know.
!
Considering the circumstances of both the Pope and that child,
even if I were to let you through, others would not allow it.

WE'RE NOT TELLING YOU TO LET US MEET THE POPE.
I MEAN, HE'S NOT EVEN HERE, RIGHT?!
I ALREADY SAID THAT, DIDN'T I?
THIS IS
JUST THAT KIND OF PLACE.
CELCIA IS A VERY IMPORTANT PERSON TO THE VATICAN,
AND THIS IS MY JOB.
Even I...
cannot meet with Celcia.

IF NOBODY CAN MOVE...

IF NOBODY CAN SAY IT...

THEN I...

IF I TAKE IT ALL UPON MYSELF...
LUCA,
RIO IS THE CHILD CELCIA IS WORRIED ABOUT MORE THAN ANY OTHER.
THAT'S EXACTLY WHY SHE LEFT EVERYONE AND CAME HERE.

SAY...
IF THINGS GO ON LIKE THIS, AND WE DON'T INVOLVE CELCIA, AND RIO DOESN'T MAKE IT...
HOW IS CELCIA GOING TO FEEL?
D...
SHE'LL PROBABLY SAY SOMETHING LIKE: "WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?"
DAMN YOU.
I'M THREATENING YOU. I'LL MAKE SURE TO TELL CELCIA THAT.
I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES.

SO... IN THE END
YOU'RE JUST LIKE ALL THE REST.
NO. I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THEM.
I HAVE ALREADY SEVERED MY TIES WITH EIGHTH.
I'M NOT GETTING PAID, AND IT'S NOT VACATION OR ANYTHING. I QUIT.
WHAT'S MORE, THAT POWER IS WHAT CHIEF HATED MOST OF ALL.

I don't wanna talk to youuuuu!
HOW STUPID ARE YOU?
H...
THIS IS SOMETHING I'M DOING BY MYSELF.
...
SENSEI.
CAN WE FINISH IPS?

Uh, but that's ...
WE PROBABLY CAN'T USE IT TO CURE YOU.
CORRECT.
Eh?
IT'LL TAKE TIME, NO MATTER WHAT.
...Yeah.
WHAT IF WE DIDN'T JUST DO THE TESTS WE ARE DOING?
FOR EXAMPLE, IF WE USED IPS AS A DIRECT CURE...
...IN THE FUTURE.
WHEN IT COMES TO THE CELLS THAT CONTINUE PRODUCING LEUKEMIA CELLS WITHIN YOU,
WITH IPS IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO REPLACE THEM USING YOUR GENES.

...Yeah.
That's true, huh?
That day is sure to come.
SFX: SMILE
Though not in time for me,
it will for others like me.
Maybe for the next one.
Anyway, what's most important is leaving that path open to Eighth.
That's what I think.

どひぇー
Whoaaaa?!
"PLEASE MARRY ME."
SFX: SHOCKED
...SENSEI.
Yeah?
WELL...
PRETEND THAT I'M NAOYA.
"SINCE IT CAN'T BE DONE IN TIME, I'LL KEEP MY HANDS FREE OF THE TESTING ITSELF. AFTER ALL, I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, CAN I?"
Chief-san, your take on this is strange.
If... if Eighth does all of those tests for me...
I've gotta pay for it all...!
SHUDDER
OH YEAH.

Eh?
...WELL,
WHAT'S HE GONNA DO NOW THAT HIS PAYCHECK'S GONE...?
Eeeeh?
Invoice Naoya for payment,
and
WE'LL GET THAT FROM NAOYA.

!
I'LL LEAVE THIS IN YOUR CARE.
HERE.

Naoya-onii-san's...?
This is

JUST THINK
OF NAOYA AS BEING WITH YOU.
...LISTEN UP.
LET'S DO THIS, NAOYA.

I'LL CAUSE A SCENE HERE!
WHOA!

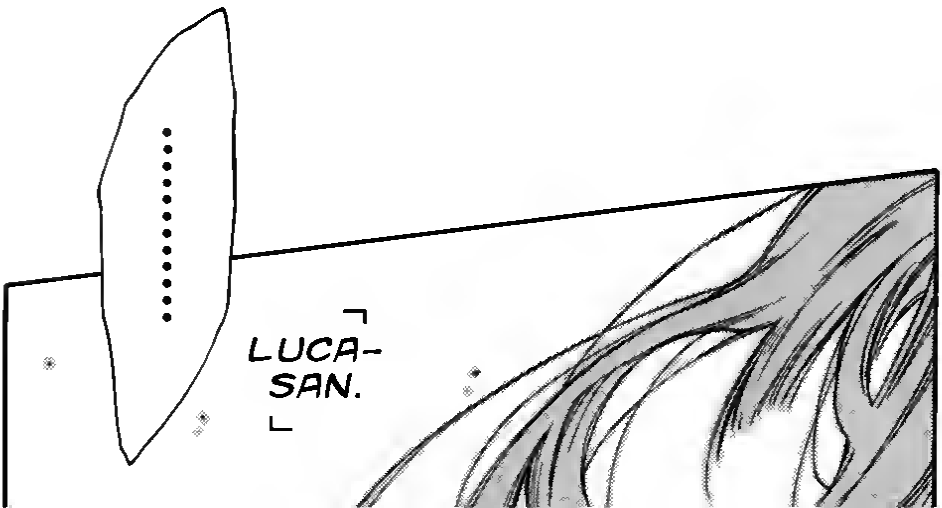
WHILE THAT'S GOING ON, YOU SLIP INSIDE!
Hey.
Y... YEAH...
It's perfect
IT'LL WORK, RIGHT?
YEAH... IT'S JUST...
Hey.

THE FRONT GATE IS MUCH MORE OPEN, SO IT MIGHT BE BETTER.
If we go through the front, security's gonna be a royal pain.
OH, I SEE.
Okay, I'll break this obelisk.
Hey, cut it out!
If you do that, you'll cause no end of problems.

OH, HOW RARE. THANKS FOR YOUR CONCERN!
BUT I HATE NOT DOING WHATEVER I'M ABLE TO.
HEY! YOU'RE A WALKING DISASTER!
WHAA?!
...WHOSE PROB-LEMS?
YOU'RE ALL SPACED-OUT, SO I'LL DO IT!
...Why would I lie about that?
.....
...LUCA,
YOU REALLY CAN'T GET ME TO CELCIA?

TOMORROW... THE SCIENCE ACADEMY

WILL ALREADY BE OPEN.



EVEN SO, IS IT MY INTENTION TO KEEP CELCIA HERE?

I THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE FINE, AS LONG AS CELCIA WAS HAPPY, AND YET...

COULDN'T I HAVE TAKEN HER HAND?

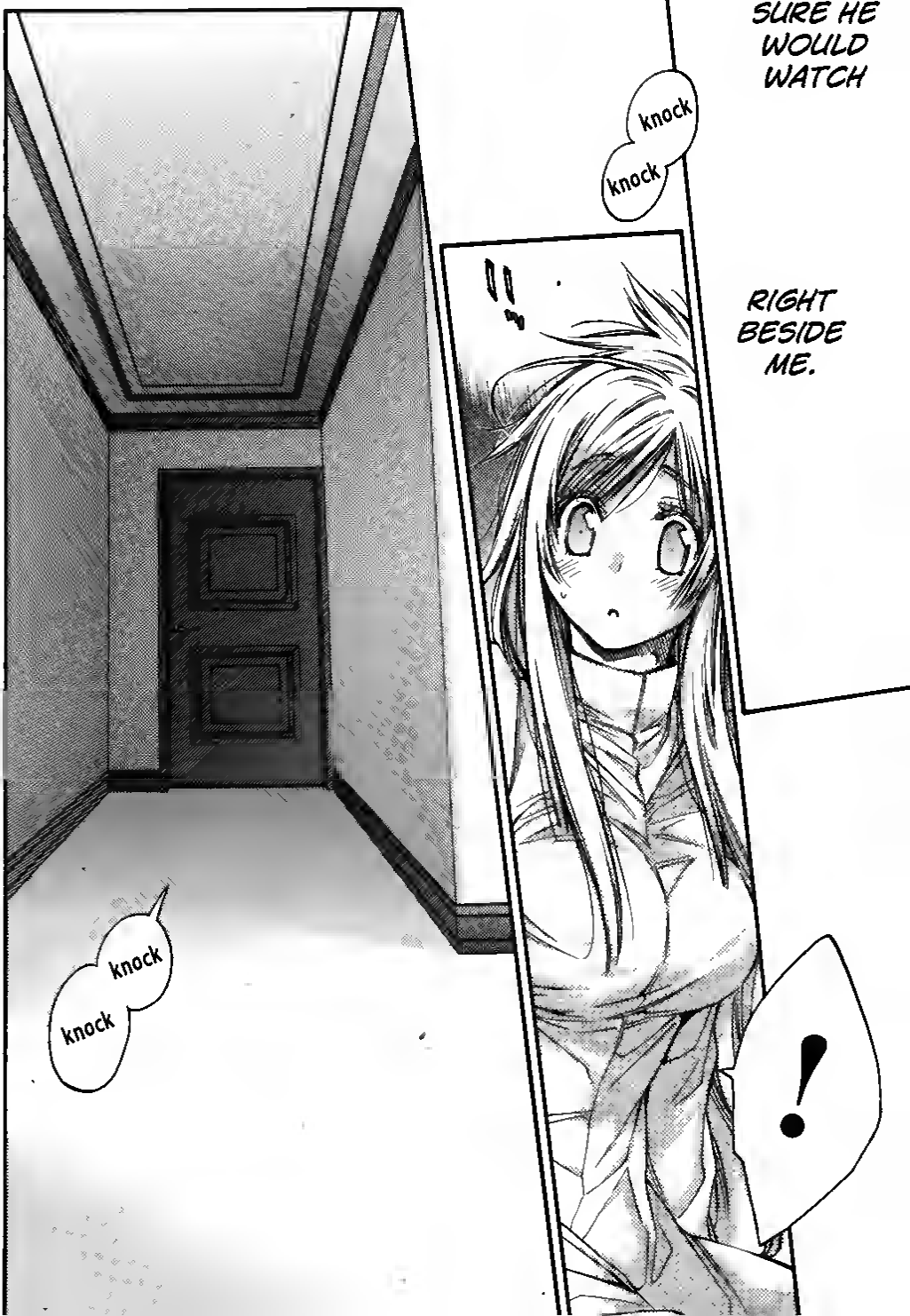
EVEN THOUGH

IT'S NOT THAT I WANTED TO MAKE HER FEEL THAT WAY...

WHY ...?
.....
SFX: TEARS...
EEEEEEH?
...WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU ALL OF A SUDDEN?
IDIOT! THAT'S MY LINE.
...
Naoya.
Uwah!
You didn't realize it?!

...I understand.
!
Follow me.

FI-
NALLY
THE ACADEMY IS...
ACADEMICS WILL GATHER THERE, AND I'LL USE MY POWER IN FRONT OF THEM.
WHAT SHOULD I DO...? IS THIS REALLY OKAY?
.....
LUCA-SAN...
WHAT DOES LUCA-SAN THINK?
WILL LUCA-SAN COME TO THE ACADEMY TOO?
...LIKE WHEN WE WERE AT EIGHTH?


I WAS SURE HE WOULD WATCH
knock
knock
!!
RIGHT BESIDE ME.
knock
knock
!

04
EIGHTH

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Typesetter: TKS
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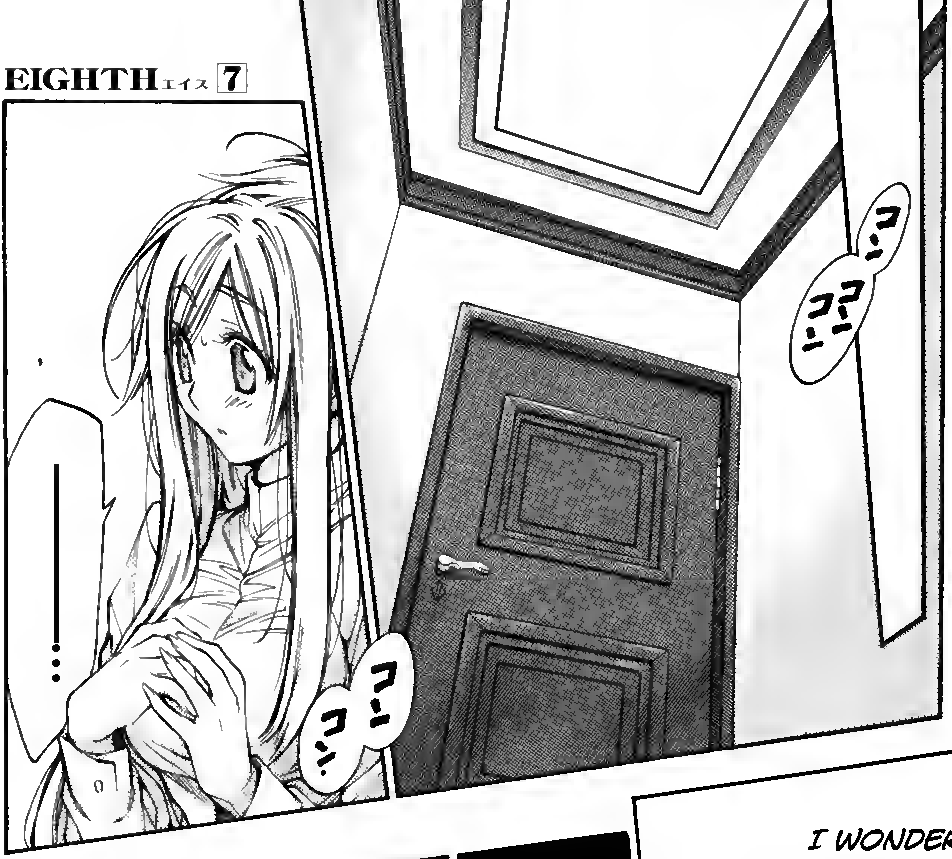


I WONDER IF IT'S SISTER ELDA?

BUT SHE SAID SHE WASN'T COMING BACK HERE TODAY...

CARDI-
NAL...?
WHOA.
HE MUST BE A TRULY ESTEEMED BISHOP...!
PL... PLEASE WAIT. I'LL OPEN UP RIGHT NOW.
ガチャ!
ガチャ
...MAY I HAVE A BRIEF CONVERSATION WITH YOU
ABOUT THE ACADEMY OPENING TOMOR-ROW?
AH... OH, YES.
OF COURSE
BY ALL MEANS, COME IN...

I WONDER WHAT HE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT...?
...OH.
SFX: GASP...
THAT'S RIGHT.
IF HE'S AN EMINENT BISHOP...
COULD IT BE ABOUT ME SHOWING MY POWER TO THE ACADEMY?
MAYBE I CAN PREVAIL UPON HIM TO STOP IT!
IT IS ABOUT...
THE POWER THAT YOU POSSESS...

IF I EXPLAIN IT PROPERLY AND ASK, I'M SURE HE'LL UNDERSTAND.
!!
Y... YES SIR.
IS IT...
REAL?

EH...?

!?
?
UH...
UMM...
WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT...?
HEY...
AH-
... SCIENCE BOOKS?
SUCH CONCEIT IN SUCH A YOUNG GIRL...
I'M ASKING IF IT'S REAL OR FAKE.
nature

WHAT?
WHY?
I AM...
WHY IS HE... IS HE UPSET?
EH...?
EH...?!
?
?
I WONDER IF I DID SOMETHING ILL-MANNERED. WHAT SHOULD I DO?
...YOU CAME TO THE VATICAN, DESPITE BEING A WOMAN.
YOU SETTLED IN AT THE PAPAL PALACE SO SHAMELESSLY.

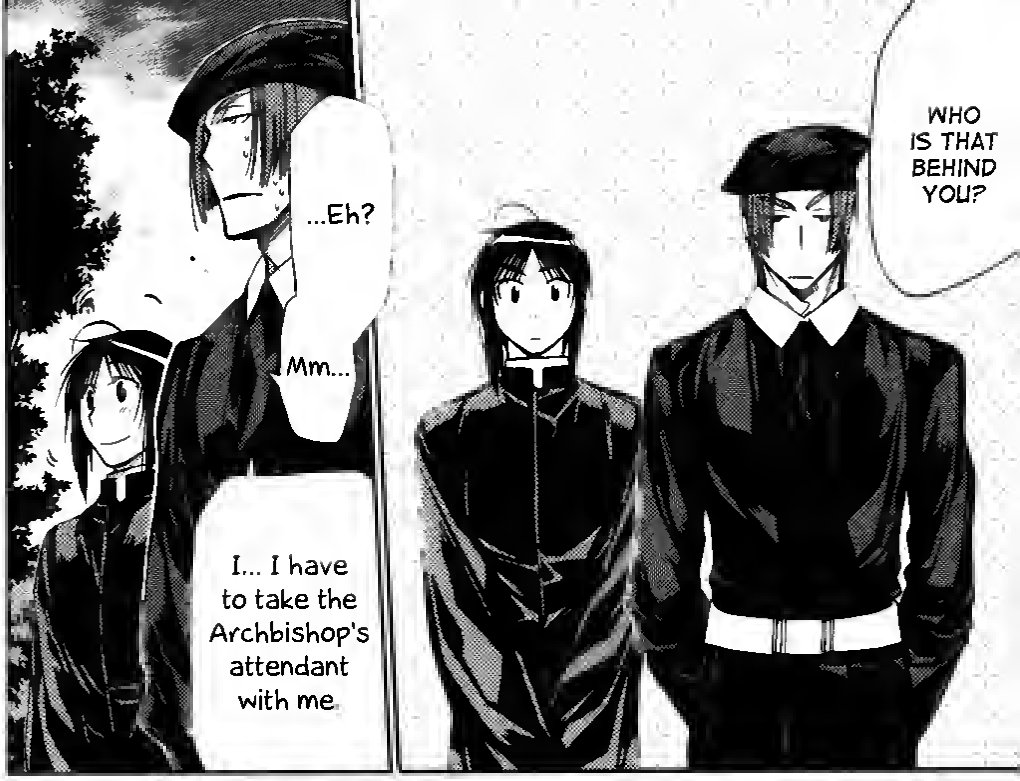
WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO GAIN FAVOR WITH?!
IS YOUR POWER THE REAL THING?
UNH...
IT...
IT IS REAL. I'M NOT LYING.
UM...

I AM...
GUH!

?!
WHY?
WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?
THIS IS NO JOKE. IF IT IS REAL, THEN IT IS THE WORK OF GOD!
IT WOULD MEAN HE ALLOWS YOU TO ACT ON HIS BEHALF!

THAT CANNOT BE.

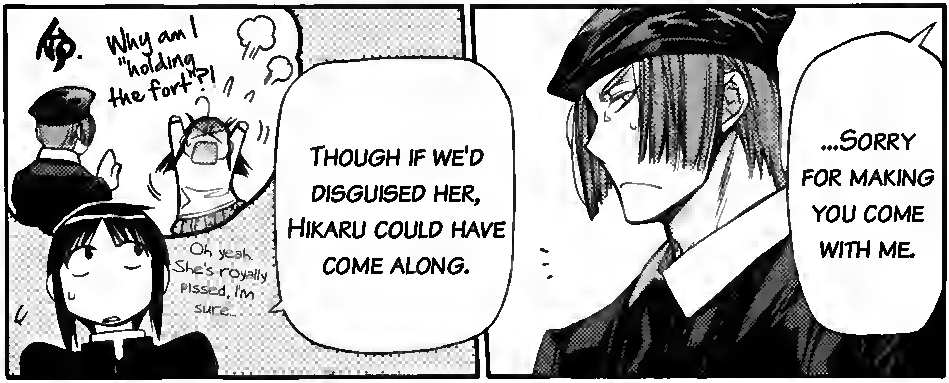
LUCA.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
YOU'RE A GATE GUARD.
Archbishop Vernanzo is calling.
I'm going to the office building.
I SEE.
BUT...


...Eh?
Mm...
I... I have to take the Archbishop's attendant with me.
WHO IS THAT BEHIND YOU?

WHOA, THERE ARE GUARDS EVERYWHERE.
IF EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM CHECKS US, THIS WILL CERTAINLY BE PROBLEMATIC.
I SEE.
YOU MAY PASS.

SFX. SHOOTING PAINS OF NERVOUSNESS

SFX: WALKING FROZEN AND STIFF SFX: WALKING LOOSE AND HAPPY


Why am I "holding the fort"?!
Oh yeah. She's royally pissed, I'm sure...
THOUGH IF WE'D DISGUISED HER, HIKARU COULD HAVE COME ALONG.
...SORRY FOR MAKING YOU COME WITH ME.

There are women among the regular staff...
EH? YOU MEAN THERE ARE ONLY MEN HERE?
...No. Whatever else happens, a woman being present would make things complicated.

Experienced...
WOW...
...I GUESS THEY DON'T WANT TO CHANCE ANY IMPRO-PRIETIES?
I don't know.
But from here on, the only women allowed to serve deep within the palace
are very experienced Sisters.
Like how only men can become bishops, for example
One might say that they're living in the wrong era.
I guess. It's an issue of doctrinal interpretation.
WHAT?! IN THIS DAY AND AGE?
It's a male-dominated society.
Eeh?
UHM, BUT...
Of course, they aren't all like that... There are all kinds of people.
WELL...
What do you mean?
IS CELCIA GOING TO BE OKAY WITH ALL OF THAT?

HIKARU'S BEEN WORRIED ABOUT HER.
SHE DOESN'T KNOW ANYBODY AROUND HER.
SHE CAN'T EVEN SEE YOU, SO SHE HAS NOBODY TO TALK TO.
.....
The Sisters have charge of Celcia's care.
They're like very experienced grand-mothers.
MARI-SAN SAID YOU SHOULD CALL PEOPLE LIKE THAT "ONEE-SAN".
.....
"Nee-samas" then.
It's an easy way to gain their favor!
OKAY.
THAT'S FINE THEN.
SHE'LL HAVE THEM EATING OUT OF THE PALM OF HER HAND.
CELCIA'S A NICE GIRL.

...
Yeah.
She is.
Let's go.
What is it?
.....
Are there usually this many guards?
...Hey.
T-T-T-
To the office for a bit.
He's stuttering ...
Where are you going, Luca?
SFX: STILL WALKING LIKE A ROBOT
...Why do you ask?
!!!
No matter how you look at it, there are too many checks.
There are a lot of people and cars, and this isn't a place tourists visit.

IS SOMETHING GOING ON?
.....
.....
It's... a science academy.
EH? REALLY?
Academics from countries all over are coming in and enjoying our hospitality,
so there's a lot of hectic coming and going.

You'll fail...
...The conference is tomorrow
WOW...
I guess they're getting in early look.
WHOA, NO KIDDING. PEOPLE ARE COMING TOGETHER.

HM?
You said you left Eighth... but why?
.....
Naoya.
THAT MEANS IT OUGHT TO BE EASY TO MOVE AROUND TOMORROW...

Um-
SO EVEN IF I DID TAKE CELCIA THERE, IT WOULD BE FUTILE.
I HAD NO CHOICE. THE CHIEF SAID THAT EIGHTH WOULDN'T USE CELCIA,
"WHY" INDEED ...

So this is all point-less...?
...I DON'T KNOW.
?
I DON'T KNOW IF WHAT I'M DOING IS THE RIGHT THING OR NOT.
I'M SURE I CAN'T CHANGE THE CHIEF'S MIND. HE IS CORRECT, AFTER ALL.
BUT EVEN SO...
EVEN IF THIS IS A WASTED EFFORT, SO BE IT.
THAT'S NOT REALLY A REASON.
IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN...

ANYWAY ...
WHICH WAY TO CELCIA?
...LUCA?
SFX: ALLEY OOP
...Tomorrow the Science Academy opens
...OH, THAT'S FINE. I HEARD ABOUT THAT.
I'M ASKING WHERE CELCIA IS...
?
In there they will observe—

Celcia's power.
...Huh?
WHAAAAAT?!
What the hell are you talking about?!
I-if that's going on, then you—
That's right.
There is the possibility that another struggle for Celcia will occur.

But...
Wasn't the reason you brought her here precisely so that wouldn't happen?
What the hell?!
I too ...
did not believe that this would happen.
What's more, there's already nothing that I can do about it.
Celcia...
You ...

YOU IDIOT!
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME RIGHT AWAY?!
Even if I'd told you, what would you have done?
Erah
AT ANY RATE, WE HAVE TO PUT A STOP TO THIS...
THEN WHY DID YOU TELL ME?
DON'T CRY, YOU JERK. GEEZ...
CRY ?
NO.
WE CAN'T LET HER GO TO THE CONFERENCE.

LUCA.
WHERE IS CELCIA?
I'LL GO THERE RIGHT AWAY!
...The 2nd Floor of the Papal Palace.
South-east, deep inside...
2ND FLOOR. THE INNERMOST...
GOT IT.
!?
Do you really under-stand?

There will be 2 people here and here...
Here and here too
Hmm. There's a lot of them
MHM, MHM
There are also surveillance cameras.
A lot of them
SERI-OUSLY?
HEY, IT'S OKAY.
I remember it from earlier
SIGHTSEEING GUIDE
It's in there
THOUGH I OON'T KNOW ABOUT THE GUAROS...
.....
IT'LL BE BAD IF YOU'RE SPOTTED COLLABORAT-ING WITH ME...
LET ME GO ON AHEAD FOR A BIT.
By yourself?
You'll be caught out immediately as an acolyte, and that'll be the end of it. It'll be fruitless.
Hmm
.....
OKAY THEN, WE'LL DO IT HIKARU'S WAY.
What?
I'LL GO RACING AHEAD AS AN INTRUDER, AND YOU CHASE AFTER ME.

What ...?
At the very least they won't seize you, since you're a guard.
If it causes a commotion, one of us should be able to get to Celcia.
You're the only one in the Vatican who can keep Celcia safe.
Even if I screw up,
You'll still be there.
.....
Naoya ...

Tell Celcia...
EH?
.....
No...
IT'LL BE OKAY.
LET'S GO.

gasp
gasp
gasp
gasp.
pant...
gulp...

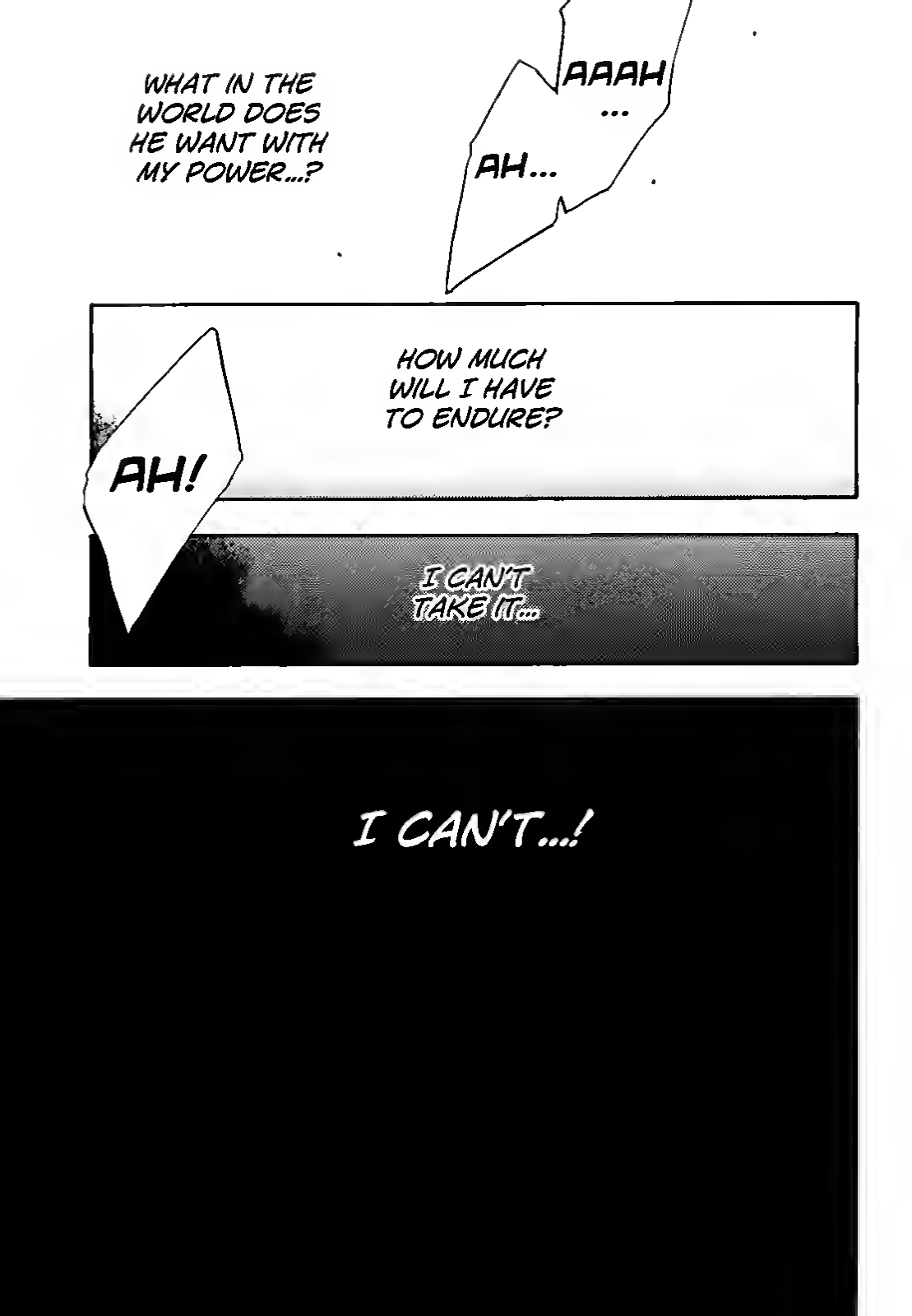
WHY?
WHY IS HE SO MAD? WHY? IS IT MY FAULT?
SO SCARED.
I'M SO SCARED.
I'M AFRAID.
Unh...
Ha...
IF I HADN'T COME HERE... IF I HADN'T EXISTED... WOULD THE CARDINAL NOT HAVE BECOME LIKE THIS?
...YOU SHALL EXCUSE YOURSELF FROM THE ACADEMY TOMOR-ROW.
Pant
...I CAN'T STAND IT ANYMORE.
PUT SIMPLY ...
Pant

NO, I CAN'T TAKE IT.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?! IS MY VERY EXISTENCE WRONG?
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!
IT IS NOT RIGHT FOR A WOMAN TO CLAIM THAT THEY HAVE A SPECIAL POWER.
NAOYA...!!
LUCA-SAN...
I'M SCARED.
HIKARU-SAN...
SAVE ME.

RIO-SAN...
choke
I HAVE TO BEAR IT.
I CAN BEAR AT LEAST THIS MUCH...
SFX: CRACK
GASP !!
ANSWER ME!!

FOR RIO-SAN'S SAKE...
WHATEVER HAPPENS AT THE ACADEMY, SAYING IT WAS A LIE
WOULD BE A DISGRACE TO CATHOLICS... SO WITHDRAW.
I DON'T WANT TO GO TO THE ACADEMY EITHER...
BUT MY VOICE WON'T COME OUT.
IF I SHOWED HIM, WOULD HE UNDERSTAND?
NO...
IF THAT MIRACULOUS POWER IS INDEED GOD-GIVEN,
THEN HOW ABOUT PASSING THAT POWER ON?

FOR EXAMPLE, BY HAVING A SON.
YES, THAT WOULD BE GREAT!
THEN YOU WOULD BE WELCOMED AT THE VATICAN AS THE HOLY MOTHER.
IF YOU USE THE POWER ...
CAN YOU *MAKE IT IN TIME* FOR THE ACADEMY TOMORROW?
AH-
gasp...


WHAT IN THE WORLD DOES HE WANT WITH MY POWER...?
AAAH...
AH...
HOW MUCH WILL I HAVE TO ENDURE?
AH!
I CAN'T TAKE IT...
I CAN'T...!

ドド
ドド
ドドド

HEY!
EH? A PRIEST?
Hey.
LUCA ?!
I'm in pur- suit.
Move aside.

NWAH!
...
GULP
WHAT A COMPLEX STRUCTURE.
This is definitely a pain to break into
DAMN ...
THERE ARE STILL MORE GUARDS.
Not there. To the left!
THAT FELT A LITTLE TOO REAL.
HE'S TAKING THIS TOO SERIOUSLY.

ARE THOSE THE LAST ONES?
knock 'em out_?
Guards?
Wait.
There are no guards assigned to that door today.
HUH?
That's where Celcia is...
To begin with, that's part of the Pope's government-use rooms and residence section.
The Pope isn't even here right now, so why...

!!
AAAAAAAAAH!!!
WHAT ...?
CELCIA'S VOICE?!

LUCA.
DAMN, WHAT'S GOING ON...!?
Hey!
What was that scream just now?!
LUCA ...
I DUNNO WE'RE JUST ABOUT TO CONFIRM—
Why are there guards here?
On whose orders?!
IT WAS SISTER ELDA WHO REQUESTED THE GUARDS.
Don't argue with me!
WE HAVEN'T LET ANYONE INSIDE.
RIGHT NOW ...
CARDINAL JENGA IS INSIDE CONDUCTING BUSINESS.

NATURALLY THEY WOULDN'T STOP A CARDINAL FROM PASSING THROUGH...
CARDINAL JENGA?! WHY?!
...CARDINAL JENGA IS CERTAINLY DEVOUT, BUT HE HATES WOMEN. HE'S HOSTILE TOWARDS CELCIA AS WELL.

HE COULDN'T BE...

COME ON...!

OPEN UP!!!
HEY, LET'S GO!
Uwaaah!

HURRY UP!
WAKE UP, STUPID!

CELCIA!

CELC-
SFX: STUNNED

04
EIGHTH

TL/TLC: Castellan
Typesetter: TKS
Cleaner: Zack
PR: Not Juubun

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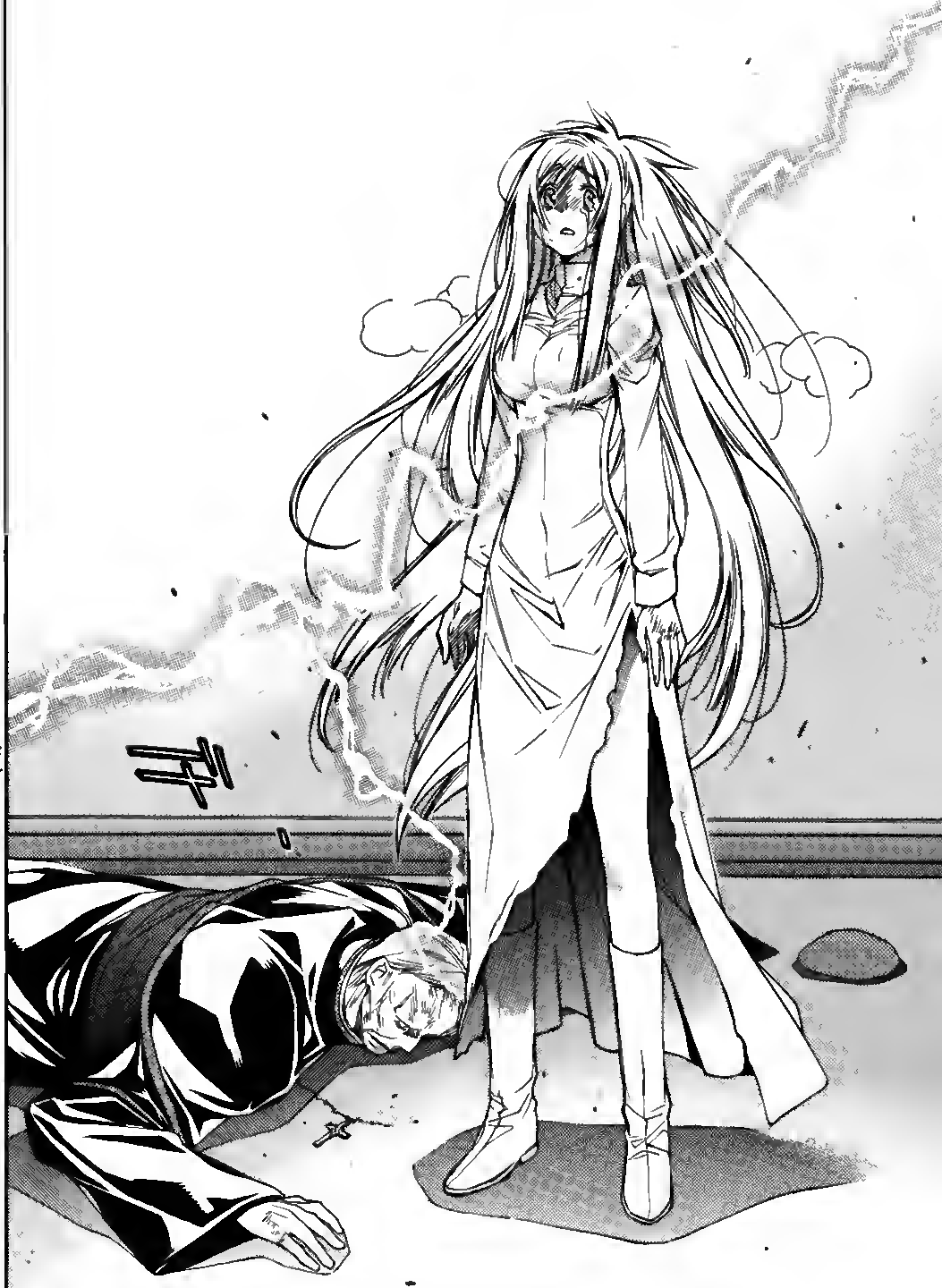
AAAAAAAH!
SFX: DZZZT
AH-
AAAAH
AH
ANH-
SFX: DZZZT

CELCIA!!
gasp



Operation.28
Quality of Life, ⑨ Just One Bit Of Selfishness

CELCIA!
NO...
I JUST CAN'T !!
STAY AWAY.
NOBODY COME NEAR ME.
NA...
OYA...

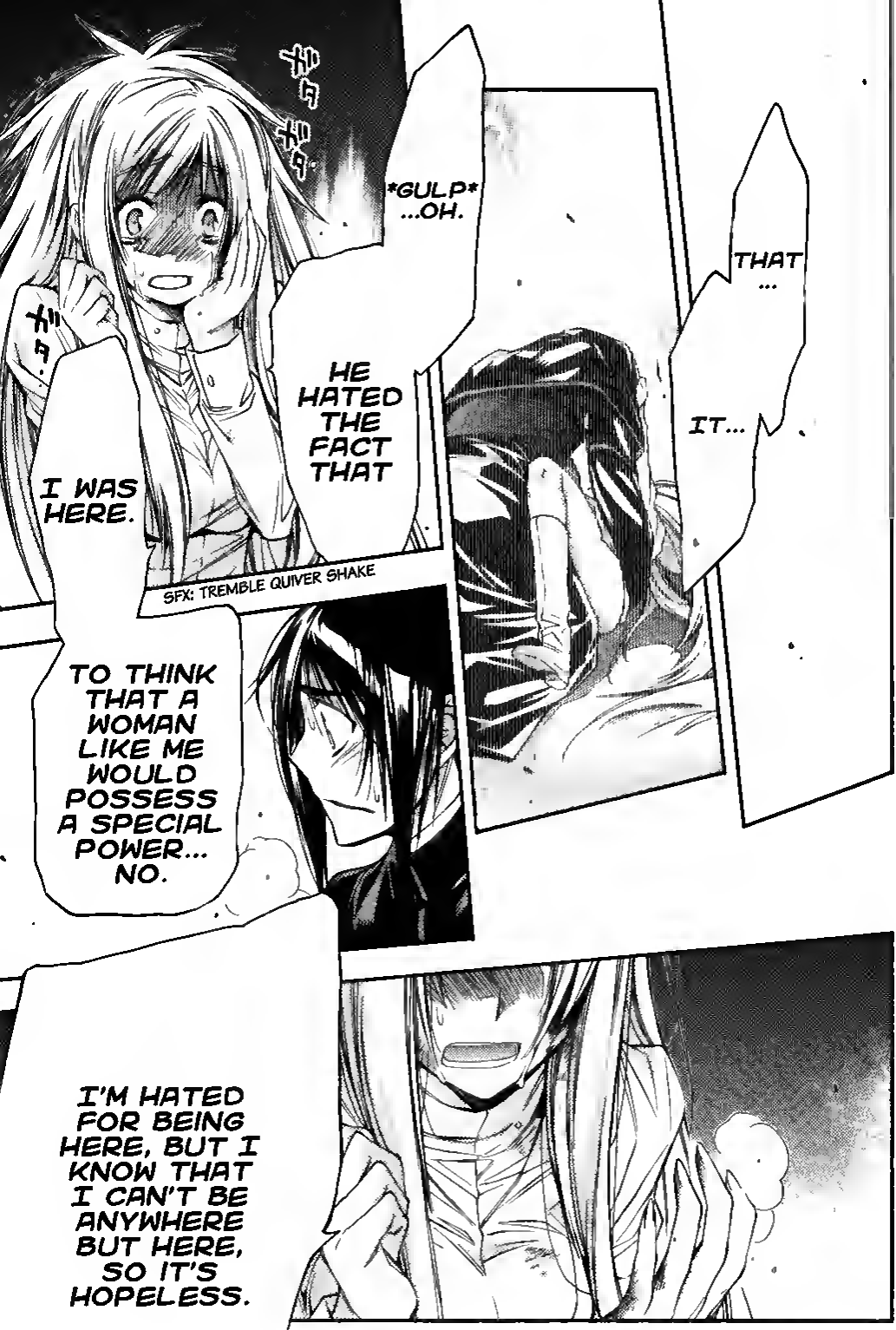
MY POWER ...
IT WON'T STOP ...
SFX: DZZZZT
...WHY? WHY AM I...
MY POWER IS...
Celcia...
I...
KILLED A PERSON...

NO...
NO!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?
BE-CAUSE I EXIST, THINGS LIKE THIS
AL-WAYS
ALWAYS ALWAYS ALWAYS ALWAYS ALWAYS ...!
BE-CAUSE I EXIST ...

ゴトゴ
!

.....
NAOYA
...
...N-
NO! LET GO, NAOYA!
I'M FINE. CALM DOWN, CELCIA.
NO, IT'S DANGER-OUS!
LOOK. I'M TELLING YOU, I'M FINE.

IT'S GETTING WEAKER.
YOU'RE HOLDING IT BACK FOR ME.
YOU REALLY ARE A NICE PERSON,
CELCIA.
NAOYA...
WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT HAPPENED?


THAT...
IT...
GULP ...OH.
HE HATED THE FACT THAT
I WAS HERE.
SFX: TREMBLE QUIVER SHAKE
TO THINK THAT A WOMAN LIKE ME WOULD POSSESS A SPECIAL POWER... NO.
I'M HATED FOR BEING HERE, BUT I KNOW THAT I CAN'T BE ANYWHERE BUT HERE, SO IT'S HOPELESS.

I...
HE...
ASSAU-
LTED
ME. AND
THEN
I...
SOB
NAOYA...
IS THERE
NOWHERE IN
THIS WORLD
THAT I CAN
LIVE...?!!
CELCIA.
...I COR-
NERED THE
CARDINAL,
AND THEN
I... IF I
WASN'T
HERE,
THEN THIS
WOULDN'T...

ドス
ドス

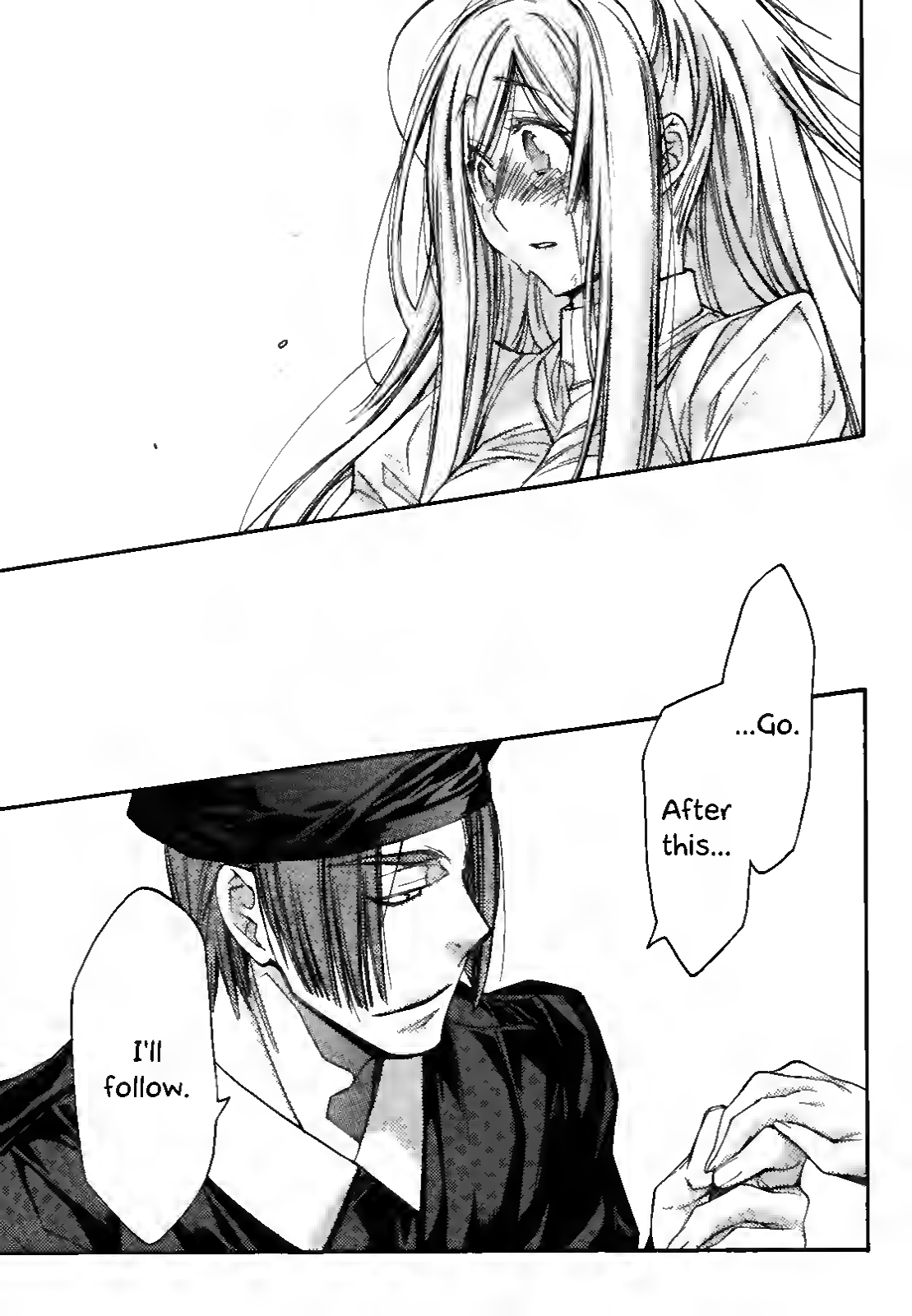
HOLD ON...
HEY! CUT IT OUT, LUCA!
LUCA-SAN.
WHY DID WE HEAR GUN-SHOTS?! HEY!
LUCA!
WHAT THE HELL IS...

LUCA!!
HEY.
GO AND FILL THE COM-MANDER IN ON WHAT'S GOING ON.
HEY, YOU TWO! GET OUT OF HERE! IT'S DANGEROUS!
LUCA, LOWER YOUR GUN!
...L-
LUCA-SAN.
...It wasn't you.

LUCA
...
SAN...
You didn't do anything.
Naoya.
Go.
LUCA...
Go back to the hallway and turn right. Go two rooms down and go out the window. Drop down and go out the back gate you reached earlier.

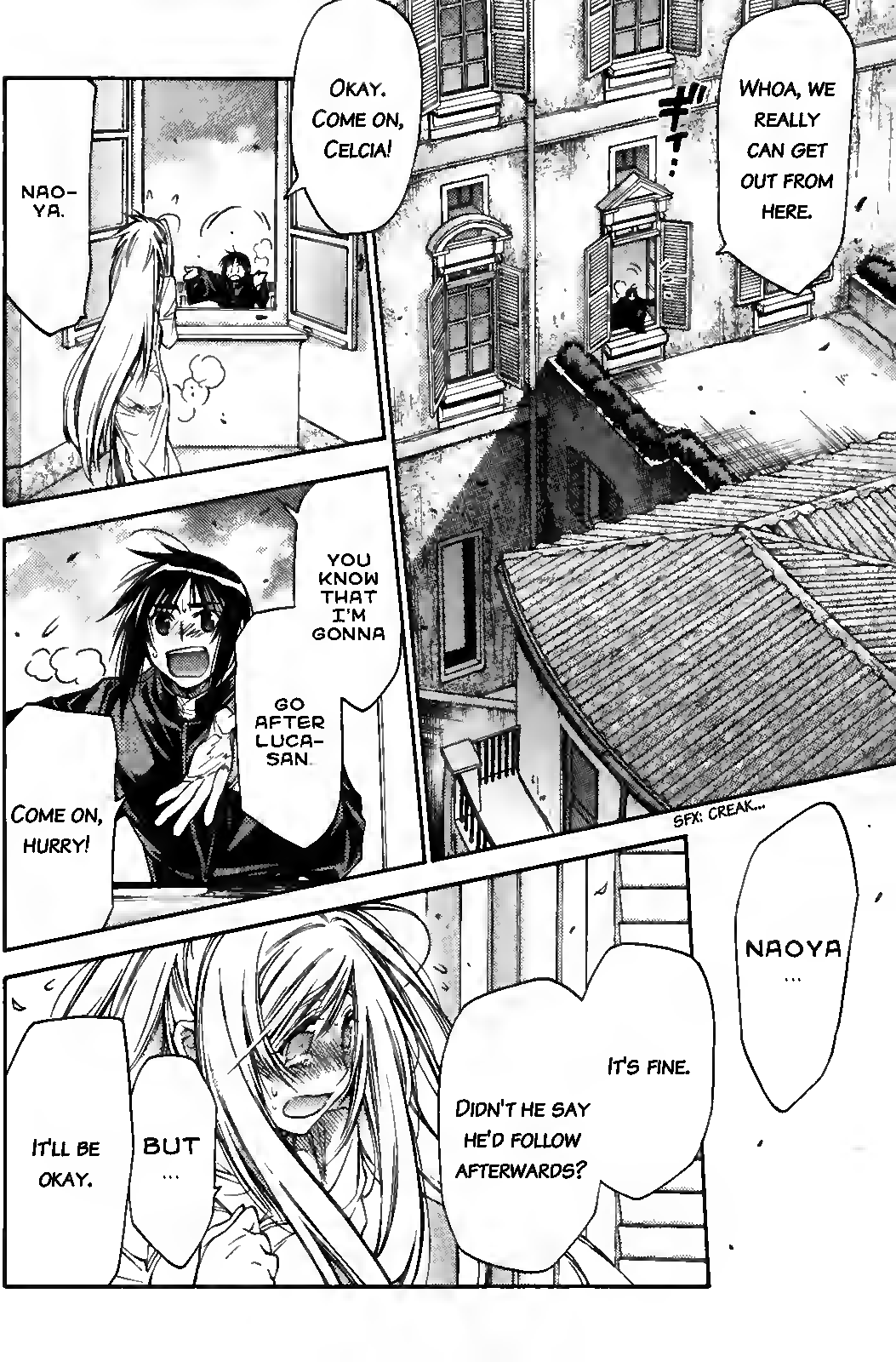
LUCA-SAN!
LUCA-SAN.
Go.
Hurry.
Go.
...CELCIA, LET'S GO.
HIKARU'S WAITING AT THE BACK GATE.
NO!
WHAT'S LUCA-SAN GONNA DO?!
I...
I DID IT!
NO!
YOU CAN'T, LUCA-SAN!

LUCA-SAN!!
You didn't do it.
You didn't do anything wrong.
...Your hand please, Celcia.
LU...


...Go.
After this...
I'll follow.

Naoya,
take her with you.
...LU-
LUCA-SAN...

NA...
NAOYA ...


WHOA, WE REALLY CAN GET OUT FROM HERE.
SFX: CREAK...
OKAY. COME ON, CELCIA!
NAO-YA.
YOU KNOW THAT I'M GONNA GO AFTER LUCA-SAN.
COME ON, HURRY!
NAOYA ...
IT'S FINE.
DIDN'T HE SAY HE'D FOLLOW AFTERWARDS?
BUT ...
IT'LL BE OKAY.

YOU KNOW THAT HE
CAN'T LIE, RIGHT?

cry...
...YEAH.
I KNOW
...

.....
...I SHOULD NEVER HAVE BROUGHT YOU HERE.

I NEVER IMAGINED CARDINAL JENGA WOULD GO THIS FAR.
DESPITE MY ORDERS,
IT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PAIN YOU NOW FEEL.
EVEN SO...
WHILE WATCHING YOU AT EIGHTH, I LOST MY EDGE WITHOUT REALIZING IT.
I SHOULD HAVE BEEN THINKING THAT, AS LONG AS YOU WERE HAPPY, WHATEVER HAPPENED TO YOU WAS FINE.

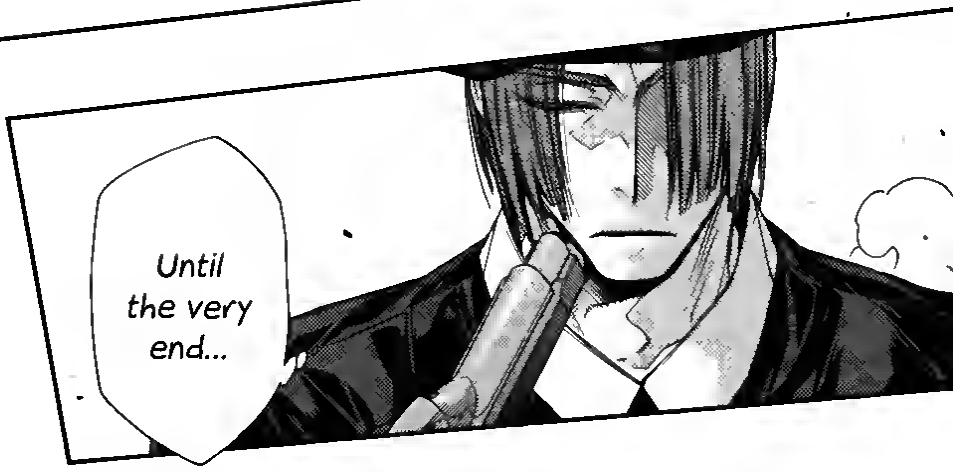
THE TRUTH IS...
NO MATTER WHAT MY ROLE WAS TO BE,
I JUST WANTED TO BE AROUND YOU.

I DID SOME-THING AWFUL...
...I'm a failure as a guard.

WHATEVER SCENERY YOU LOOK AT...

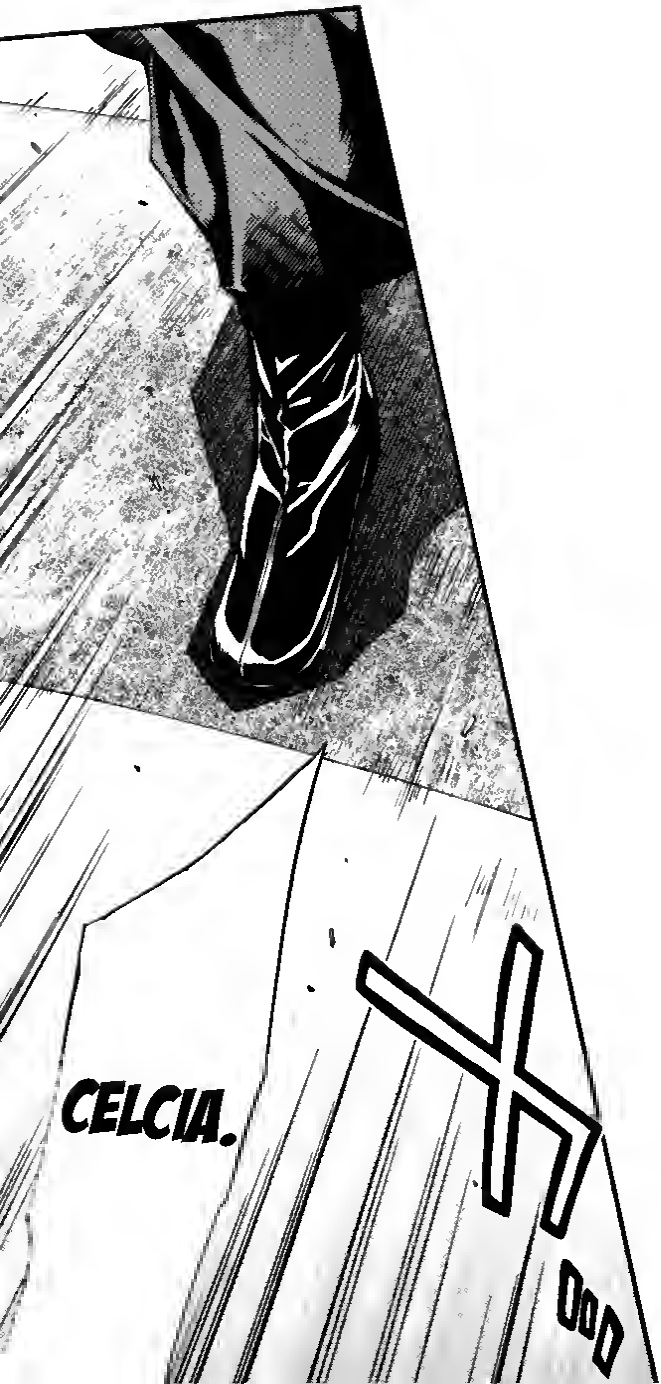
WHATEVER AWFUL HUMANITY YOU SEE... JUST SMILE.

YOU SHOULD BELIEVE THAT THIS IS A GREAT WORLD— NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU'RE INCLINED TO DOUBT IT...



I WANTED TO SHELTER YOU,

CELCIA.


YOU WERE ALWAYS MY...
CELCIA.

Y... YES.
A LITTLE MORE AND WE'LL MAKE IT OUTSIDE.
KEEP IT UP.
O-
OKAY...
SFX: PHEW—
AGH, WHAT NOW?
THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE!
...DAMN.
GOTTA HURRY.
WE HAVE TO MOVE! QUICKLY!

pop
LUCA IS...
SFX: BANG

UHM...

AH...

CE—

NOOOOOOOOO!!

SFX: GASP
は、
HIKARU!!
!

NAO...
WAH!
EH? HOLD ON!
WHAT'S WRONG ...?
HUH? CELCIA?!
SORRY, HIKARU.
TAKE CELCIA FOR ME.
EH?
HUH?! WHAT?!
GO BACK TO EIGHTH AHEAD OF ME.
CAN YOU KEEP CELCIA SAFE?!
ER...
SEND WORD TO MARI-SAN AND HAVE HER PREPARE SOMEONE FROM THE GUARDS.
AND KEEP ALL OF THIS QUIET.

I'M GOING BACK IN.
WHAT?!
?
?
!?
I'M COUNTING ON YOU.
EH?! HOLD ON.
WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO?
GEEZ, I DIDN'T THINK I'D HAVE TO SAVE ANOTHER PRINCESS!
DAMN, THAT BASTARD.
I'VE GOTTA SPRING HIM OUT OF THERE.

WAIT, NAOYA. I COULD HEAR GUNFIRE EARLIER!
I KNOW.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN. THEY'VE BEEFED UP THE SECURITY AND CLOSED THE GATE.
WE CAN'T GET OUT OF THE VATICAN!
UH...

COME ON, NAOYA! WHAT DO WE DO?!
AND ABOVE ALL,
WHY IS CELCIA HURT?!
NAO—
HEY, ATTENDANT.
WHY DID YOU EXIT THE PAPAL PALACE?
!

I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS...
DAMN IT!
SOMEONE SAW YOU CLIMB OUT OF A WINDOW.
EXPLAIN!
BUT IT'S NOT WORTH CAUSING A SCENE OVER.
YOU WILL COME TO THE GUARDHOUSE—
...AH,
GEEZ!

!!
!!
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN EXPLAIN ALL OF THIS.

HALT!
HEY, HOLD HIM DOWN! HE'S A SUSPECT!
Seriously
Uhhhh
SFX: WAH!
WHAT WAS THAT?!
I SAID WE'D HEAR YOU OUT, DIDN'T I?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO FLED!
I'M IN A HURRY! LET GO OF ME!

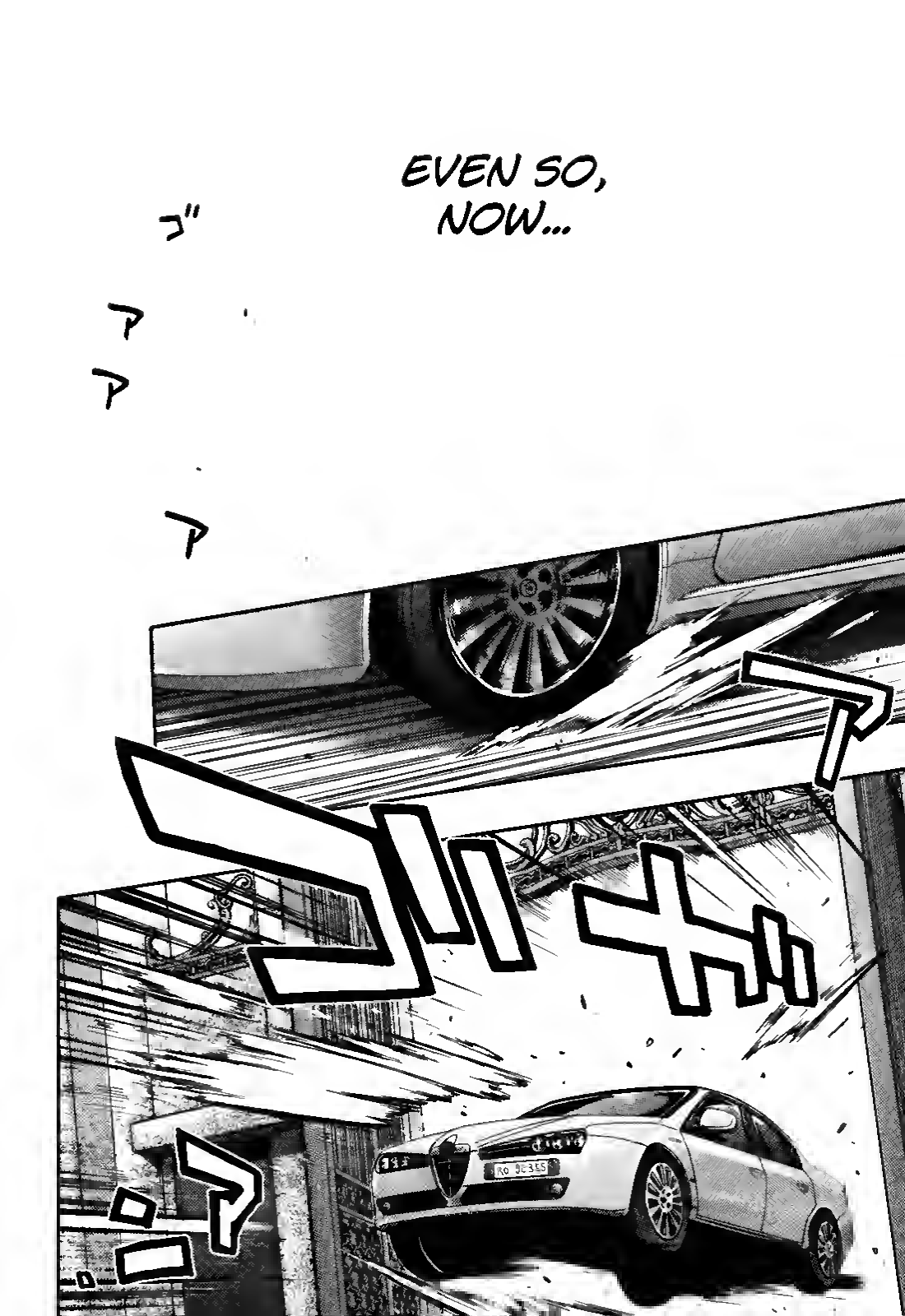
TELL THEM "THE BISHOP COMMITTED AN ASSAULT"...? NO WAY.
I CAN'T DO THAT UNLESS I BRING UP "CELCIA" AS WELL.
THEN FILL US IN.
WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN THE PAPAL PALACE?
OKAY, THEN WHAT?
THE BISHOP IS DEAD, SO NOW SOMEONE HAS TO BECOME A SCAPEGOAT?
WHY?!

WHO'S IN THE WRONG?

CAN NOTHING BE DONE ABOUT IT?

CAN I DO NOTHING WITH MY OWN STRENGTH?

I GET IT. THINGS DIDN'T TURN OUT THE WAY I'D THOUGHT. BUT...


EVEN SO,
NOW...

!?
... HUH?

キィ
Naoya-kun!
ガチャッ
!

MA-
MARI-SAN?!
Thank goodness you were still at the back entrance.
EH?
Look, aren't you supposed to stop for the Guardsmen?
They're not going to let you inside the Vatican, you know.
I've already been inside.
EH?
WELL...
SFX: STARE...
Sorry about our kid.
Y-
YEAH.

NO, NO, NO! THE CAR IS NOTHING BUT TROUBLE!
Oh no! The gate was closed, wasn't it?
I'm very sorry, but surely it's still during business hours.
NOW HOLD—
DUE TO THE CURRENT SITUATION, IT IS NOW CLOSED. PLEASE LEAVE.
WAH ...
むぅ
Oh my.
That's troublesome for me.
I am here to work.
SFX: MMM...
...DO YOU HAVE PROOF OF THAT?
Um...
Proof?

!?
HEY.
THE BELT WON'T COME OFF.
OH, I'M SORRY. PLEASE PUSH THE RED BUTTON.
YES, THAT...
HM? OH...
TH...
PHEW
THAT VOICE.

THAT'S WHAT I WANNA ASK YOU!!
...WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
Becoming a priest?
どへえええ
WH... WHY ARE YOU HERE, DOCTOR?
HM?
"WHY", YOU ASK...?
I AM A MEMBER OF THE VATICAN'S SCIENCE ACADEMY.
HM?
OH, IF IT ISN'T THE SHOUNEN.
EVEN SO, THE VATICAN'S A REALLY LONG TRIP.
...AH.
DR ANGELA ?!!

EXCUSE ME?

WHAT I MEAN IS...
I WAS CALLED TO THE PALACE BECAUSE THEY'RE OPENING AN ACADEMY, AND NOW THE STREET'S CLOSED? BY THE GUARDS HERE?
びっ
WE'RE VERY SORRY, DOCTOR!

WAIT...
Naoya-kun,
OH, AND THAT SHOUNEN IS MY GUARD. DON'T TEASE HIM.
YES MA'AM!
ぴぃ
!
the Vatican Science Academy is inviting the best researchers in each field to be members.
They need only excel in their area.
Race, religion, sex... none of that matters.
ALTHOUGH YOU'RE ALREADY HERE... BRINGING ME HERE WAS ORIGINALLY SUPPOSED TO BE YOUR TASK.
...OH.
"HEY, SHOUNEN! SORRY, BUT I NEED YOU FOR..."
THAT'S WHAT IT WAS!

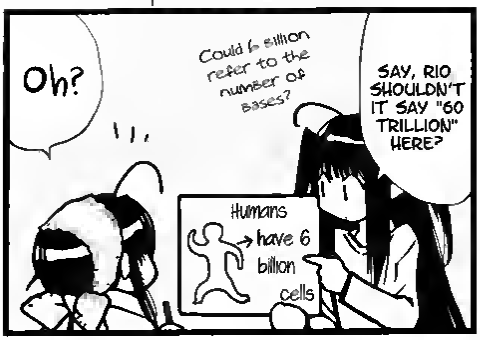
HEY! YOU SHOULD LISTEN MORE CAREFULLY THAN THAT, SHOUNEN!
Y-YES MA'AM!
SFX: EEP
THE SUBJECT OF THIS ACADEMY IS AMAZING!
...HUH?
IT SEEMS THEY SOMEHOW HAVE "INSTANTLY-GROWN WHEAT"!
This is earth-shaking...!
Um...

THAT'S GOTTA BE IT!
AH... HEY!
THAT WOULD MEAN...
AN "OBSERVATION OF CELCIA'S ABILITY".
WHAT A THING TO HAPPEN...
SHE CAME TO THE VATICAN... FOR THAT!?
EXCUSE ME.
I'M GOING INSIDE WITH THEM—

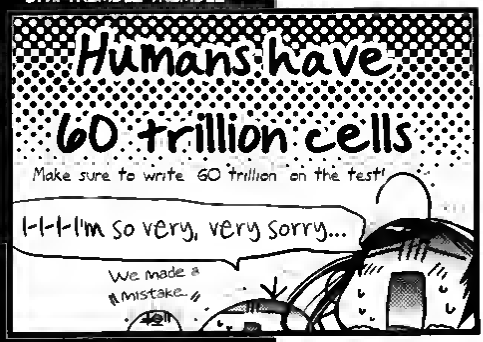
...I'M SORRY, NAOYA.
LUCA-SAN.
PLEASE ALLOW ME TO ENTER WITH YOU.
I'M BEGGING YOU!

IT'S ALL MY FAULT...
BUT EVEN SO...
WHY DID THIS HAPPEN...!?
Episode 7 The End

A conversation from the previous volume (Vol6)



SFX: TREMBLE TREMBLE



あとがき。

●そんなわけで、おわびと訂正です。
ほんとに申しわけない…。
●今回はページの都合で、
なにわん戦記はお休みです。
次の巻で復活するといいな…。
●とゆうことで、えらいことになってきた
バチカン編です。一体どうなるの!?
…なんてところで、次巻 またお会い
しましょう! iPSのお話は もう少し
続きますよー! では!

河内和泉

STAFF

EIGHTH・VOL7

やぶちんさん・城うれくん・
冨森くん・
助さん・内山くん 福西さん・
and
健ちゃん(いつも通りの活躍ぶり)
おかん(ごはんおいしいです(ω^))
おとん(食べすぎげんきん)
and
中川健(担当)あざーす!

ガンガンコミックスJOKER
GC JOKER

EIGHTH

7

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